

(12)

United States Patent

Shapira et al.

(10) Patent No.:

US 9,703,882 B2

(45) Date of Patent:

Jul. 11, 2017

(54)

GENERATING SEARCH RESULTS

CONTAINING STATE LINKS TO

APPLICATIONS

(58)

Field of Classification Search

None

See application file for complete search history.

(71)

Applicant: Quixey, Inc., Mountain View, CA (US)

(56)

References Cited

(72)

Inventors: Liron Shapira, Mountain View, CA (US); Tomer Kagan, Sunnyvale, CA (US); Matthew T. Elder, Los Altos, CA (US); Michael Harris, Mountain View, CA (US); Jonathan K. Lerner, San Jose, CA (US); Jonathan Ben-Tzur, Sunnyvale, CA (US)

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

7,979,457 B1

7/2011

Garman

8,161,050 B2

4/2012

Venolia

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

JP

2003132060 A

5/2003

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

AppURL connects native apps to the web with http URLs: <https://web.archive.org/web/20130804070658/http://appurl.org>, last accessed on Aug. 4, 2013.

(Continued)

(21)

Appl. No.: 15/149,118

(22)

Filed: May 7, 2016

(65)

Prior Publication Data

US 2016/0253420 A1 Sep. 1, 2016

Related U.S. Application Data

(63)

Continuation of application No. 14/195,709, filed on Mar. 3, 2014, and a continuation of application No. 14/195,643, filed on Mar. 3, 2014.

(Continued)

(51)

Int. Cl.

G06F 7/04 (2006.01)

G06F 17/30 (2006.01)

(Continued)

(52)

U.S. Cl.

CPC ..... G06F 17/30882 (2013.01); G06F 3/0481 (2013.01); G06F 3/0482 (2013.01);

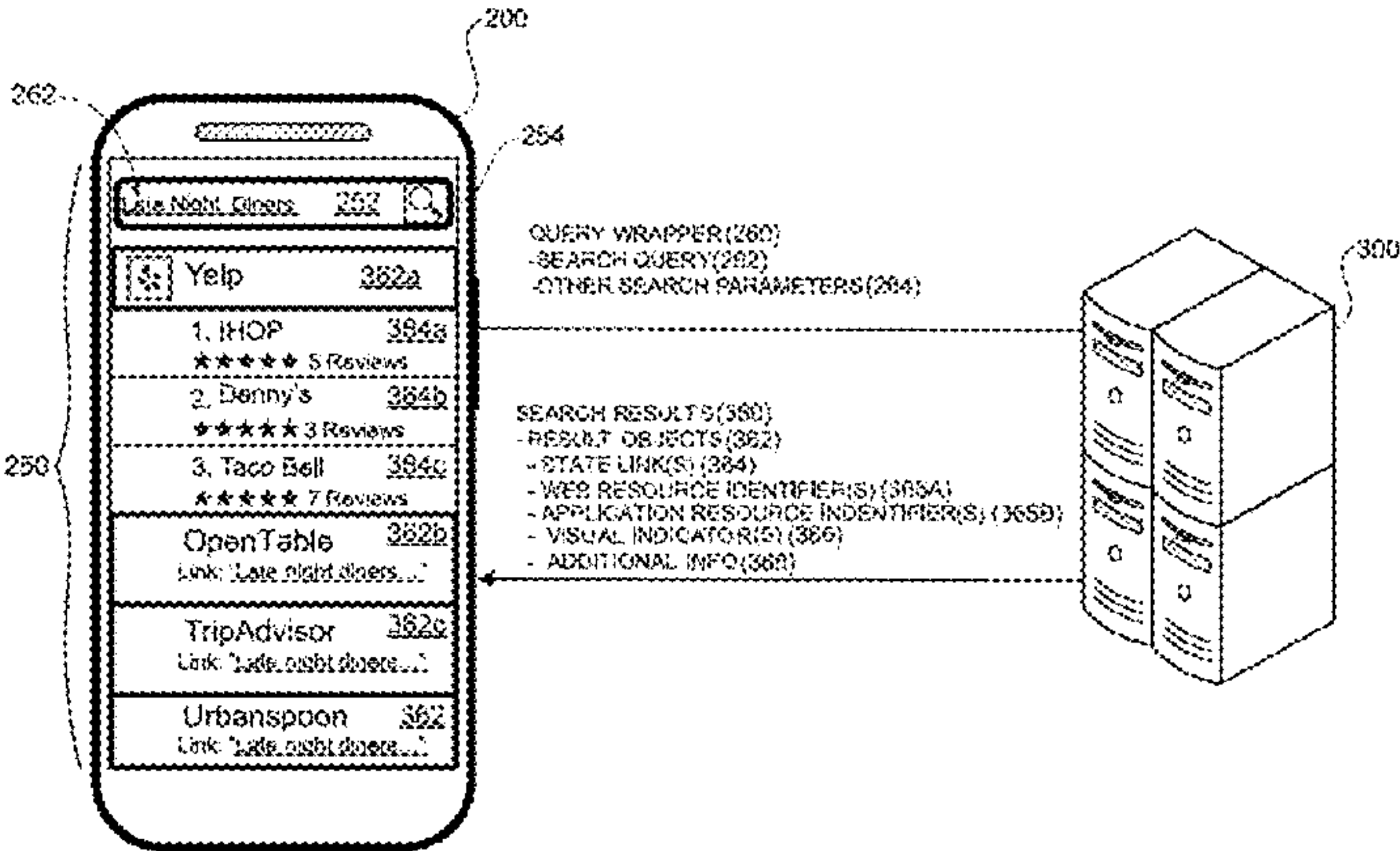
(Continued)

(57)

ABSTRACT

A mobile computing device includes a touchscreen, a transceiver, a non-transitory memory, and a computing processor. The memory stores an installed, native first application associated with an operator of a search engine. Upon executing the computer-readable instructions, the processor displays a first graphical user interface (GUI) on the touchscreen via the first application. The processor receives a search query via the first GUI, including one or more search terms. The processor transmits the search query to the search engine via the transceiver. The processor receives search results from the search engine in response to transmitting the search query to the search engine. At least one of the search results includes a post-execution view of a second native application. The processor displays the post-execution view on the touchscreen. The post-execution view includes a

(Continued)



second GUI that provides access to a function associated with the second native application.

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

23 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 61/924,032, filed on Jan. 6, 2014, provisional application No. 61/771,614, filed on Mar. 1, 2013.

(51) Int. Cl.

*G06F 3/0484* (2013.01)  
*G06F 17/22* (2006.01)  
*G06F 3/0481* (2013.01)  
*G06F 3/0488* (2013.01)  
*G06Q 10/02* (2012.01)  
*G06F 3/16* (2006.01)  
*G06F 3/0482* (2013.01)  
*H04L 29/08* (2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl.

CPC ..... *G06F 3/04842* (2013.01); *G06F 3/04847* (2013.01); *G06F 3/04883* (2013.01); *G06F 3/167* (2013.01); *G06F 17/2235* (2013.01); *G06F 17/3087* (2013.01); *G06F 17/3089* (2013.01); *G06F 17/30277* (2013.01); *G06F 17/30554* (2013.01); *G06F 17/30864* (2013.01); *G06F 17/30958* (2013.01); *G06Q 10/02* (2013.01); *H04L 67/02* (2013.01)

8,386,455	B2	2/2013	Basu et al.	
2008/0201307	A1	8/2008	Swartz	
2012/0124061	A1	5/2012	Macbeth et al.	
2012/0124062	A1	5/2012	Macbeth et al.	
2012/0166411	A1	6/2012	MacLaurin et al.	
2012/0284247	A1	11/2012	Jiang et al.	
2012/0316955	A1 *	12/2012	Panguluri	G06Q 30/02705/14.41
2013/0086027	A1 *	4/2013	Hebert	G06F 17/3064707/706
2013/0218870	A1 *	8/2013	Bukurak	G06F 17/30864707/722
2013/0290318	A1	10/2013	Shapira et al.	
2013/0290319	A1	10/2013	Glover et al.	
2013/0290321	A1	10/2013	Shapira et al.	
2013/0290322	A1	10/2013	Prosnitz et al.	
2013/0290344	A1	10/2013	Glover et al.	
2013/0325892	A1	12/2013	Edwards et al.	
2014/0006409	A1	1/2014	Prosnitz et al.	
2014/0040226	A1	2/2014	Sadhukha et al.	

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

International Preliminary Report on Patentability for PCT Application No. PCT/US2014/019859, dated Sep. 11, 2015, 9 pages.  
Japan Patent Office Notice of Ground for Rejection for Patent Application No. JP 2015-560392, dated Aug. 3, 2016, 4 pages.  
International Search Report and Written Opinion for PCT Application No. PCT/US2014/019859, dated Jun. 18, 2014.  
Communication under Rule 70(2) and 70a(2) and Supplementary European Search Report and Written Opinion for European Application No. 147568737-1952 corresponding to PCT/US2014/019859.

\* cited by examiner

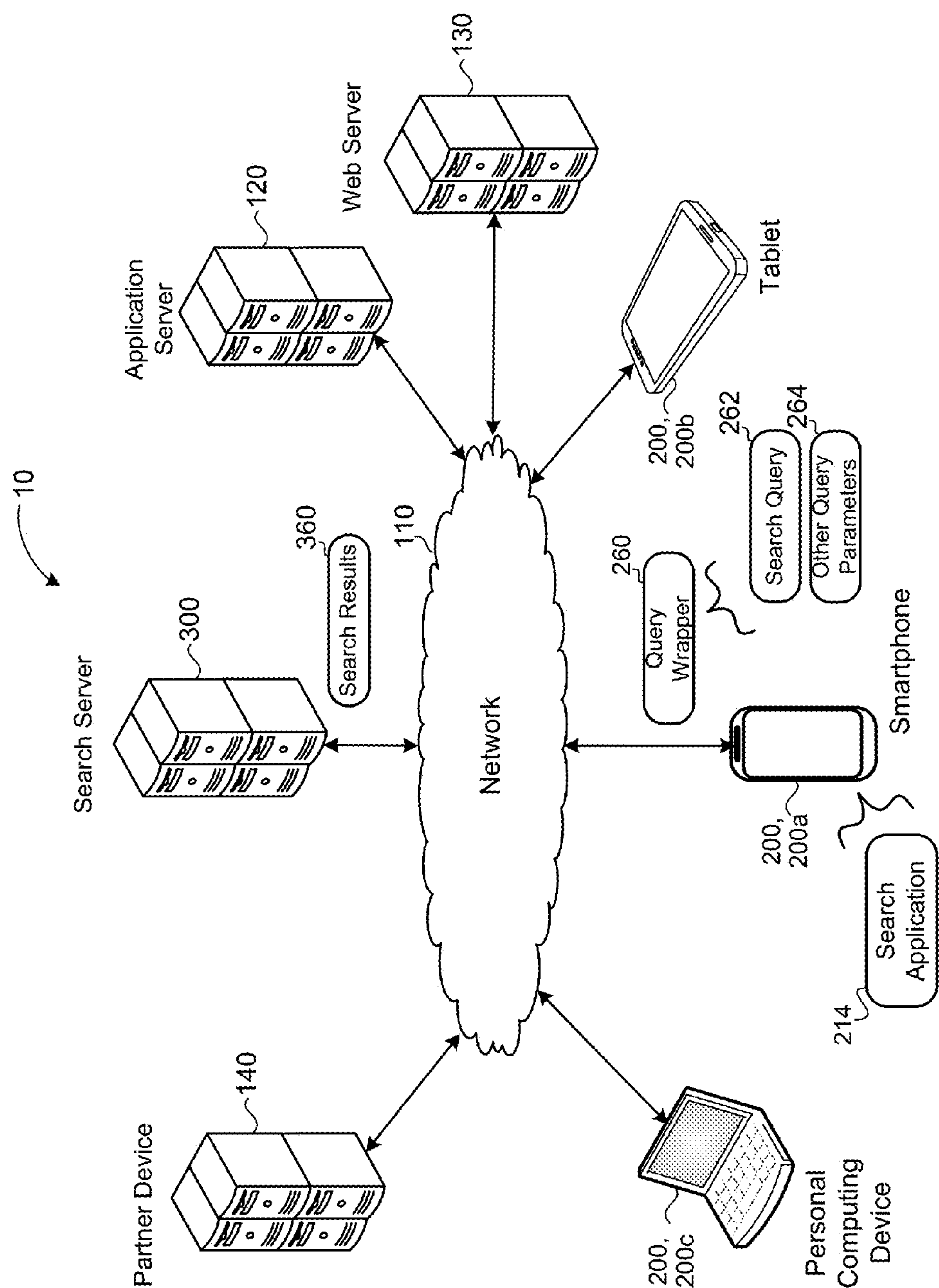
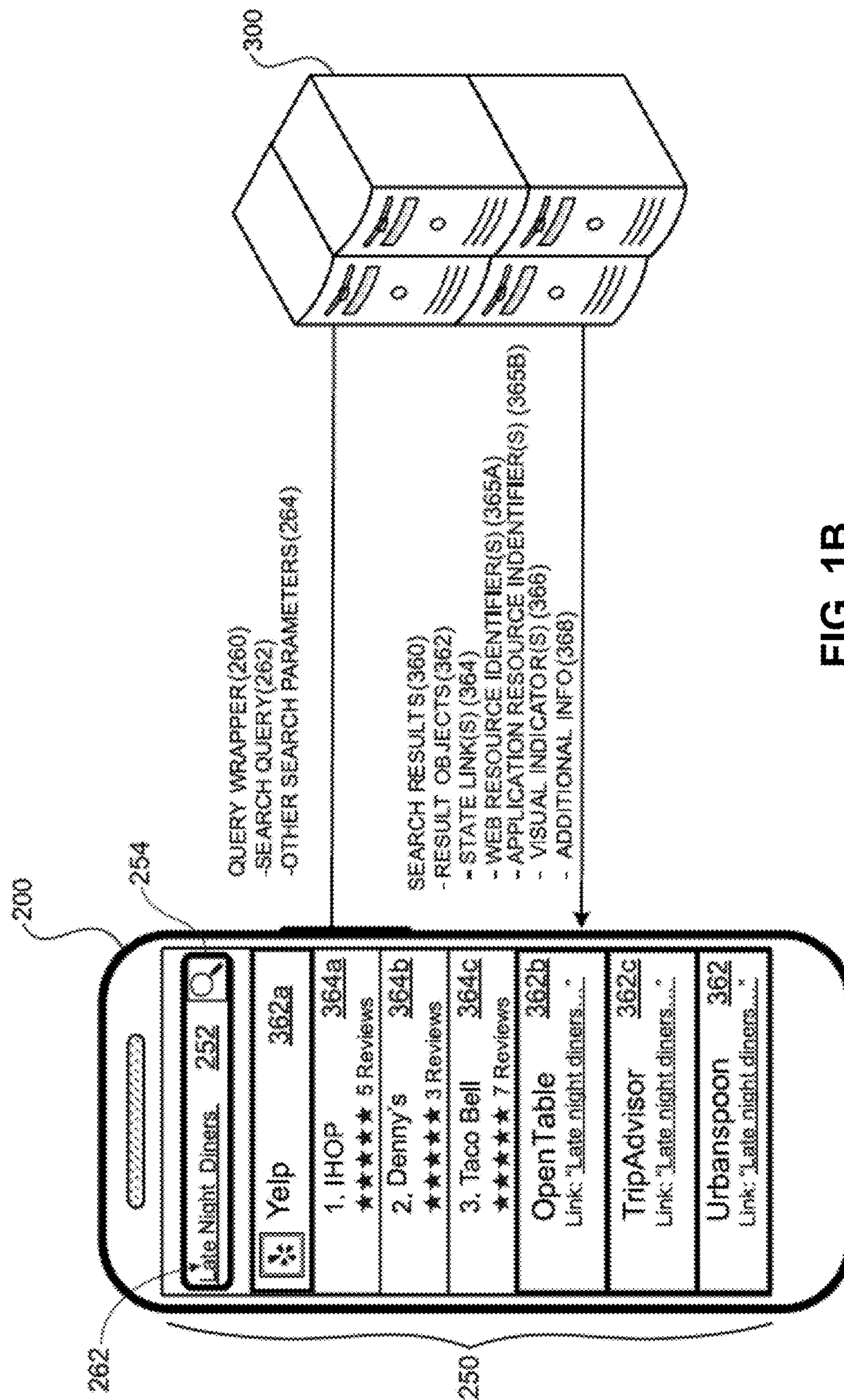
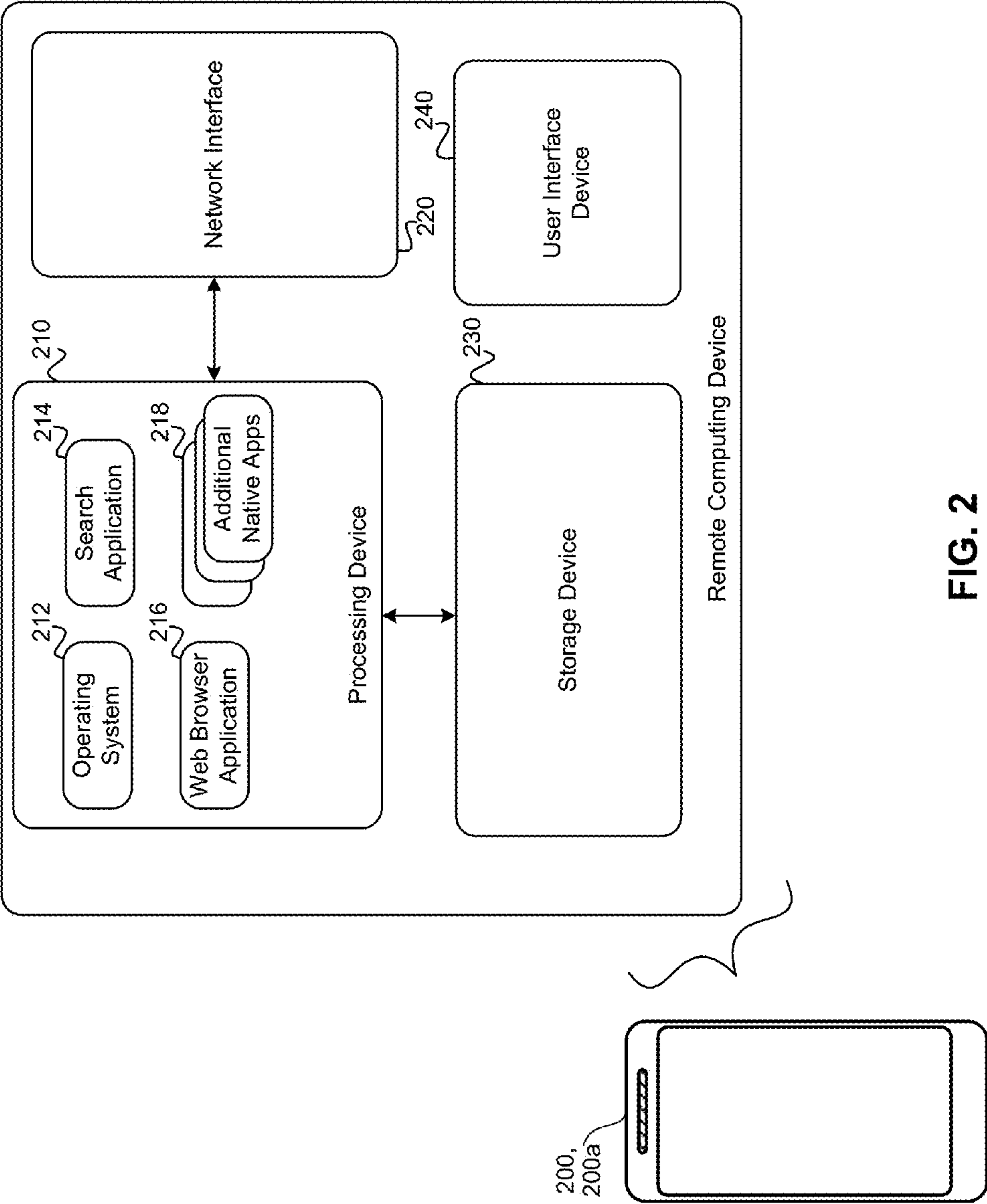


FIG. 1A





**FIG. 1B**



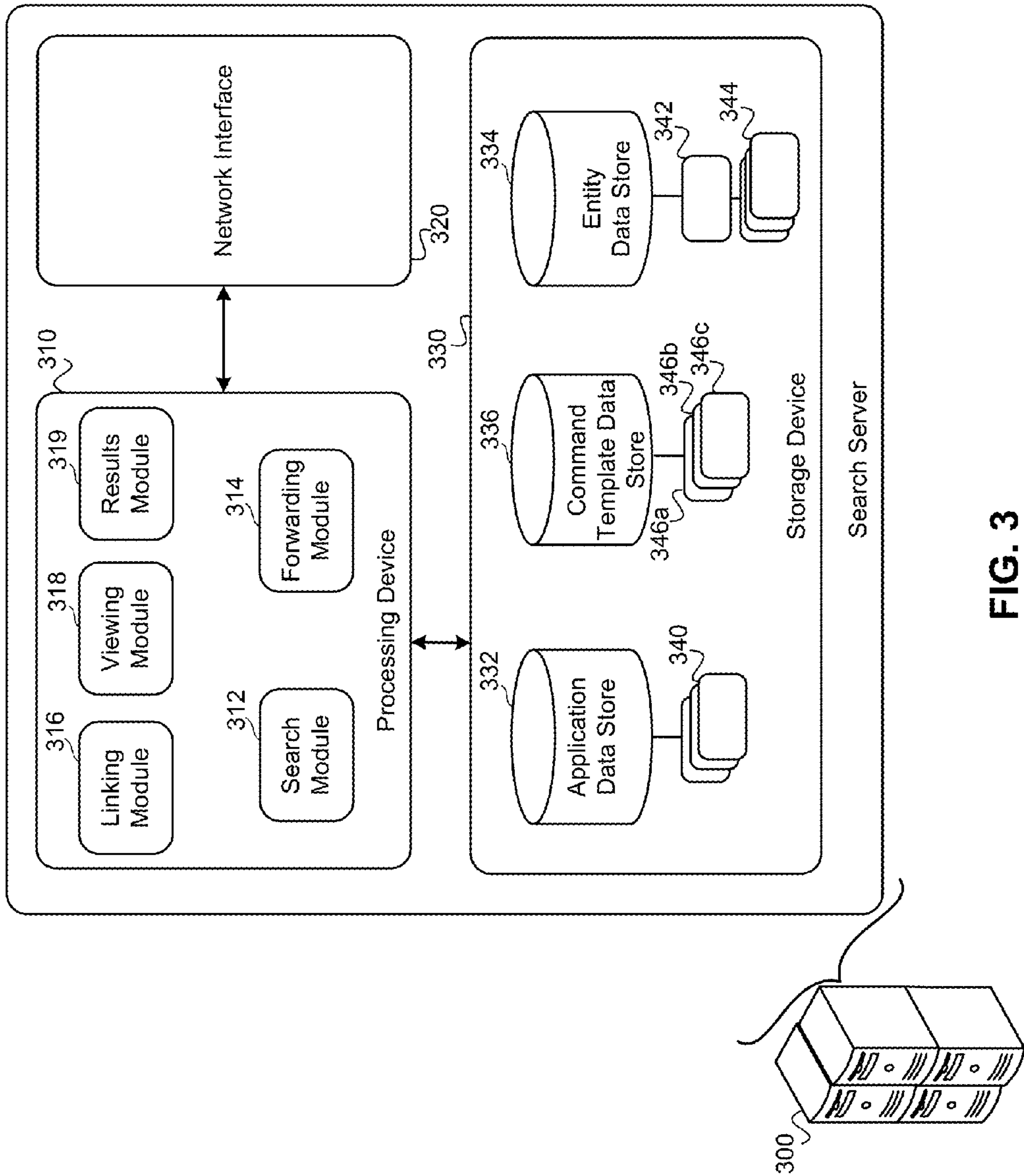
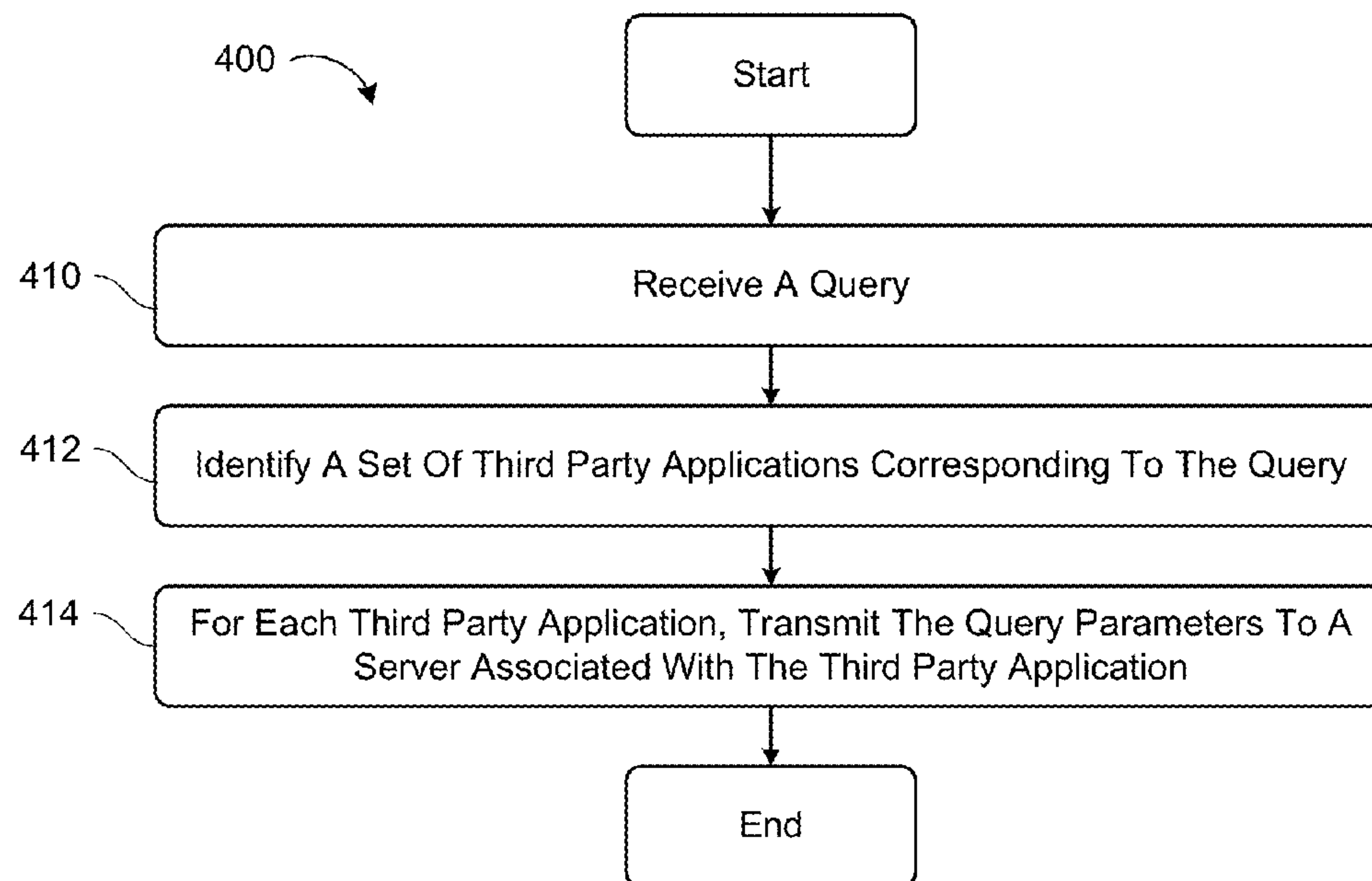
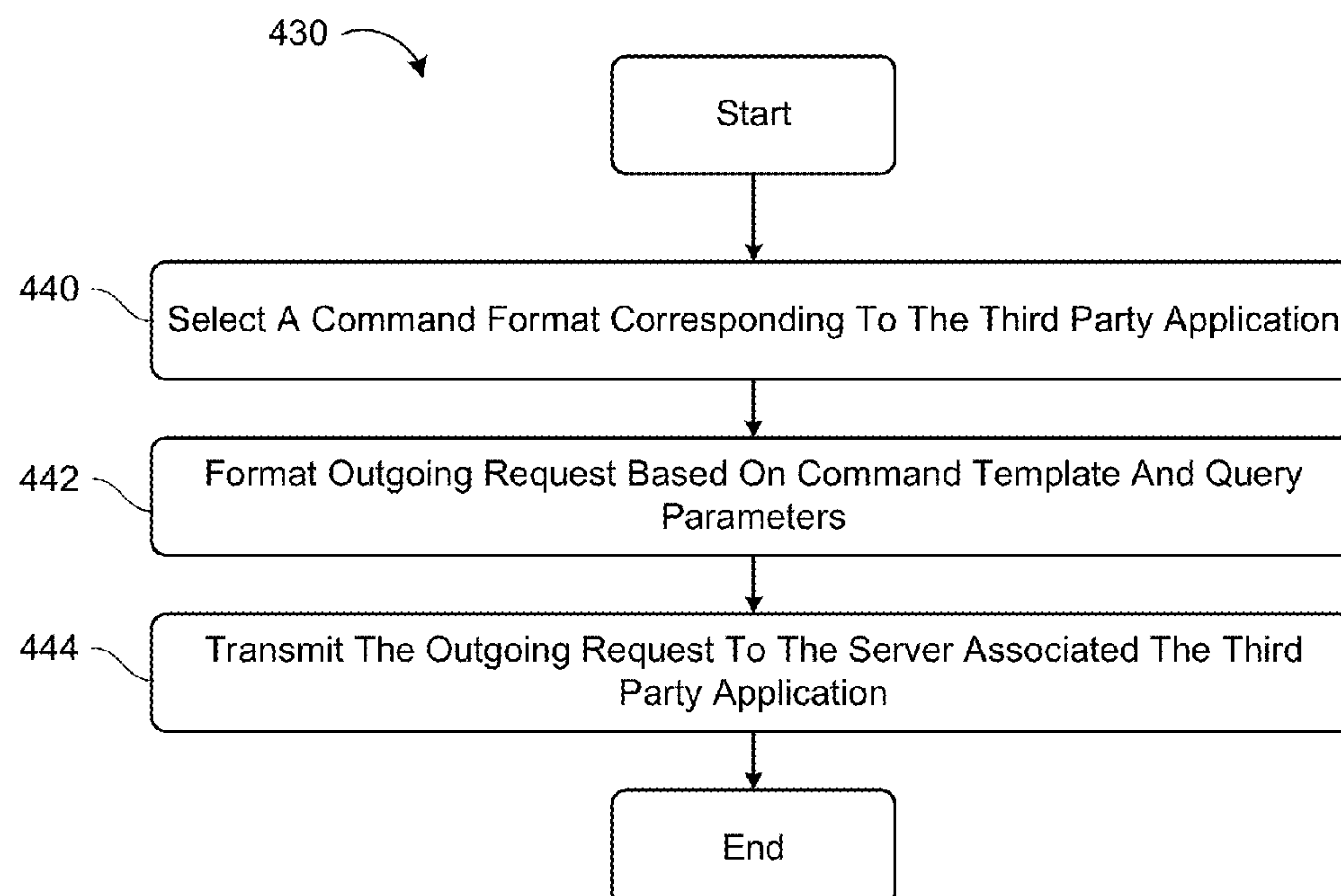
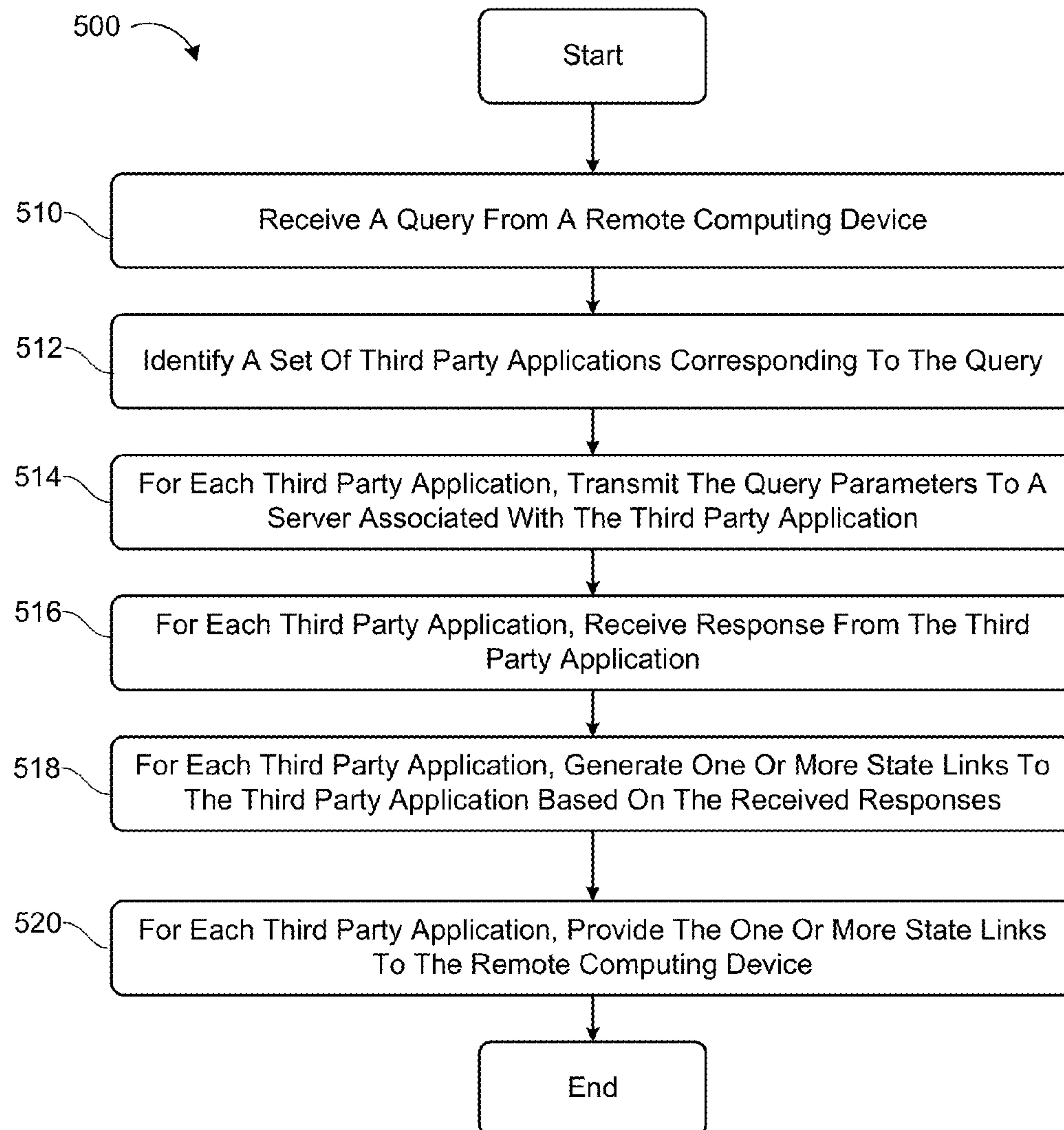


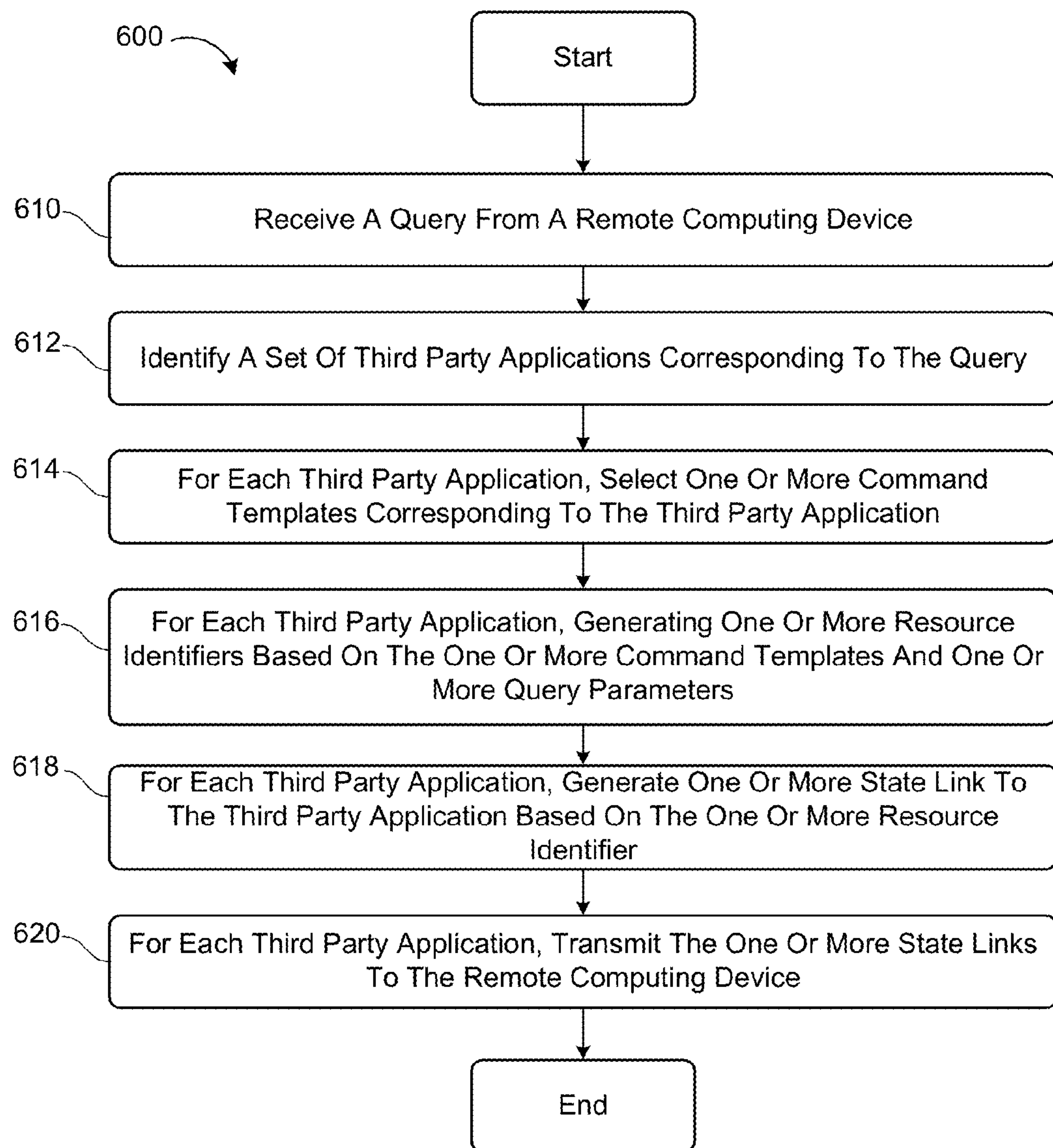
FIG. 3

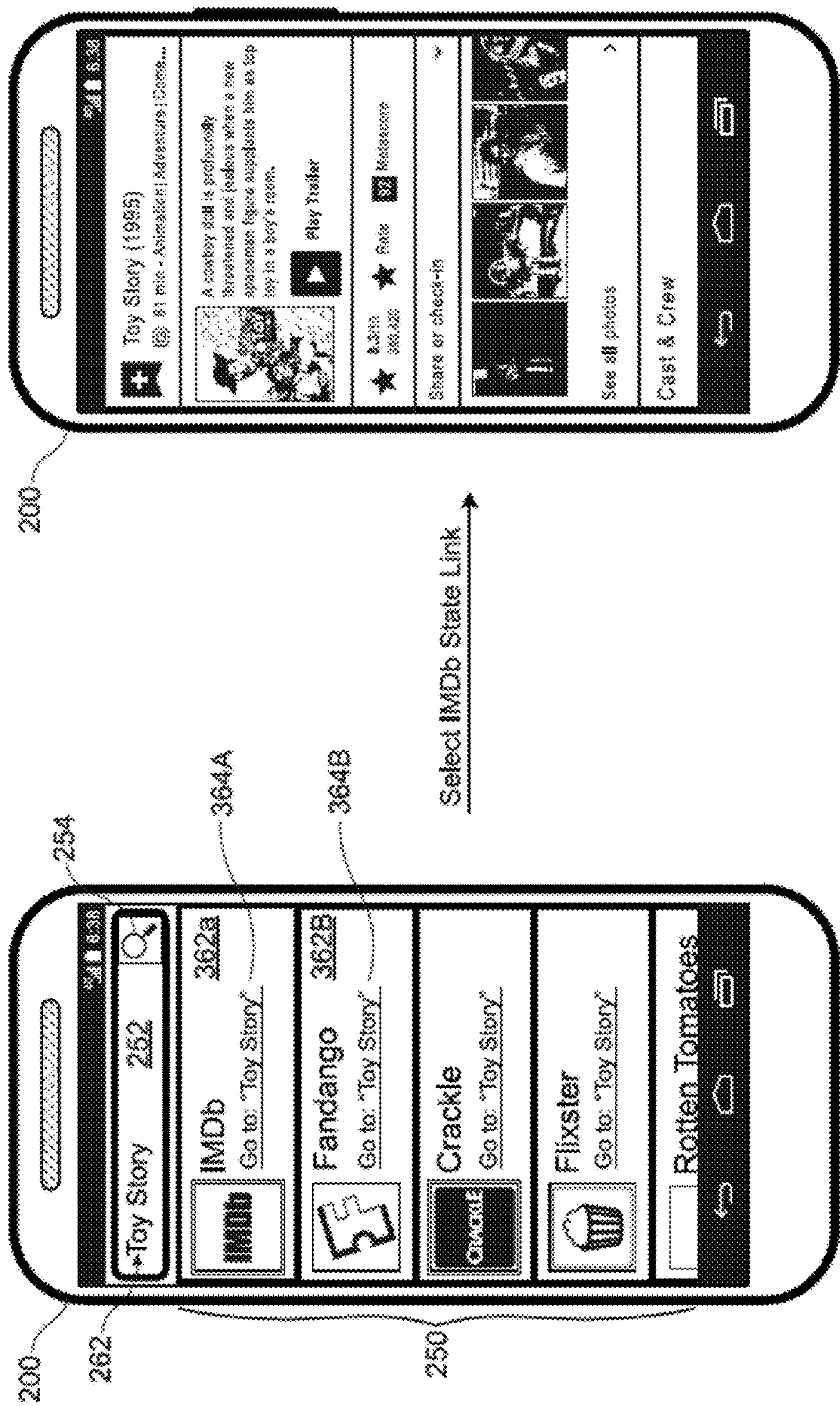
**FIG. 4A****FIG. 4B**



**FIG. 5**



**FIG. 6**





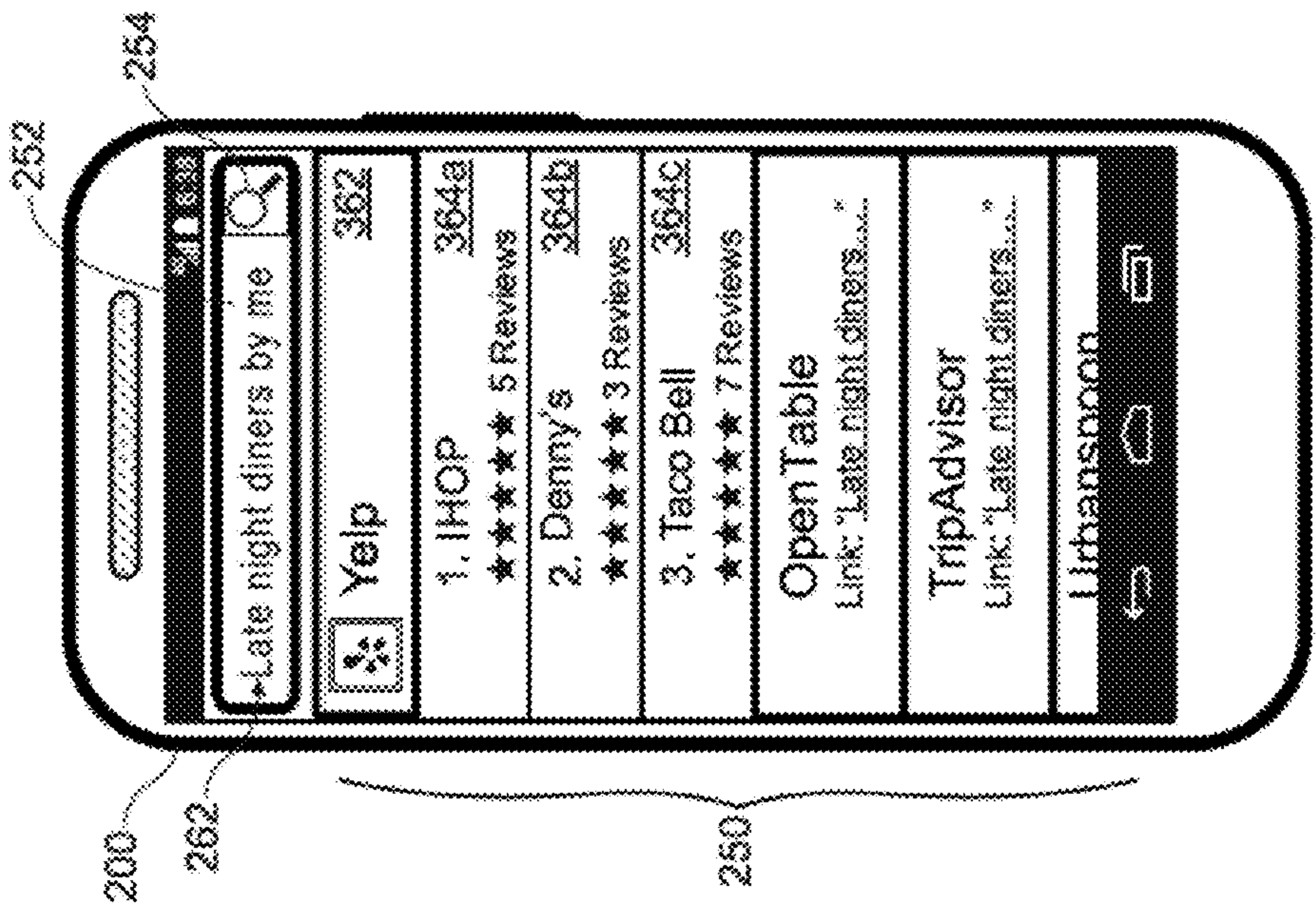


FIG. 8A

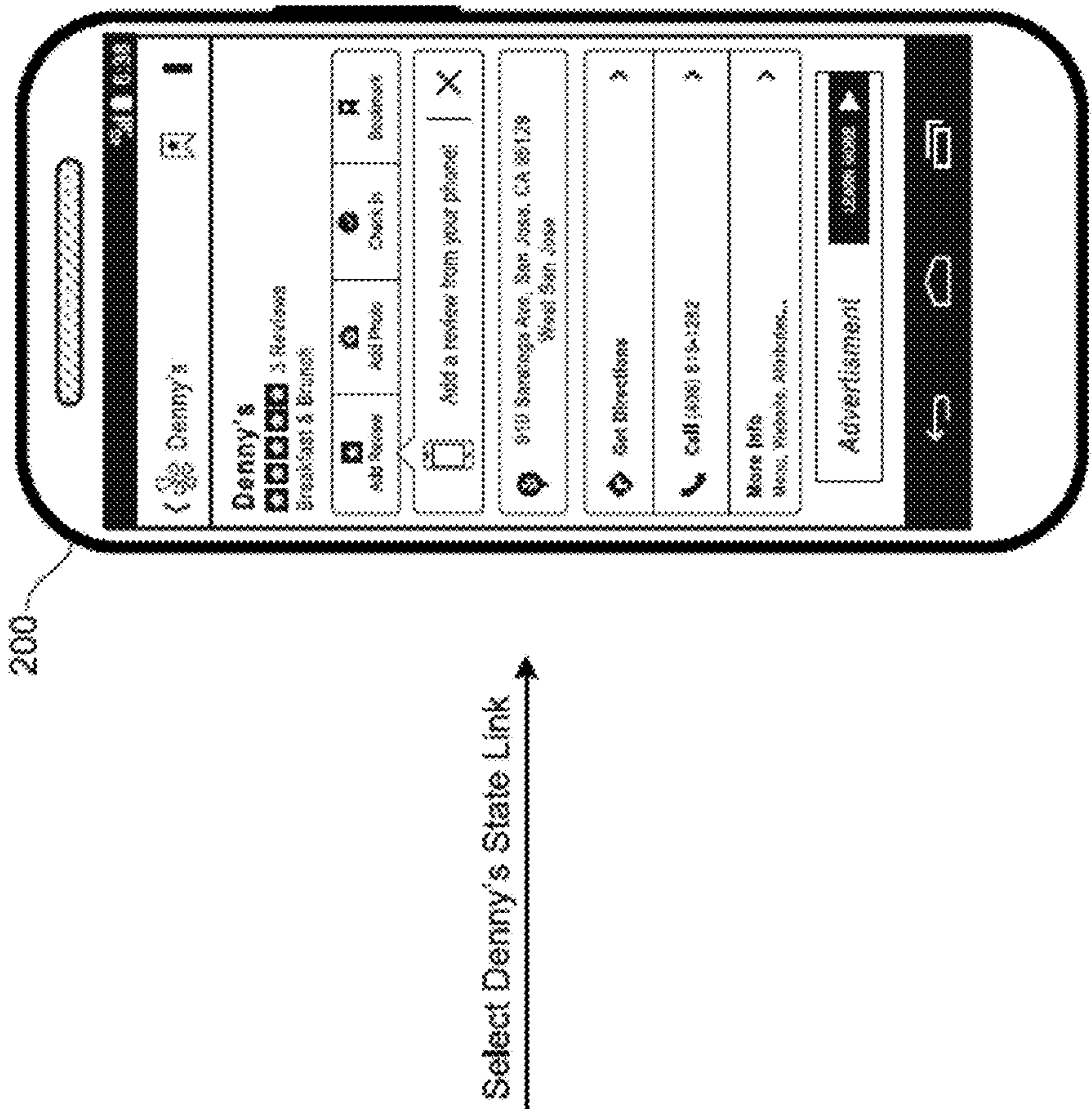


FIG. 8B

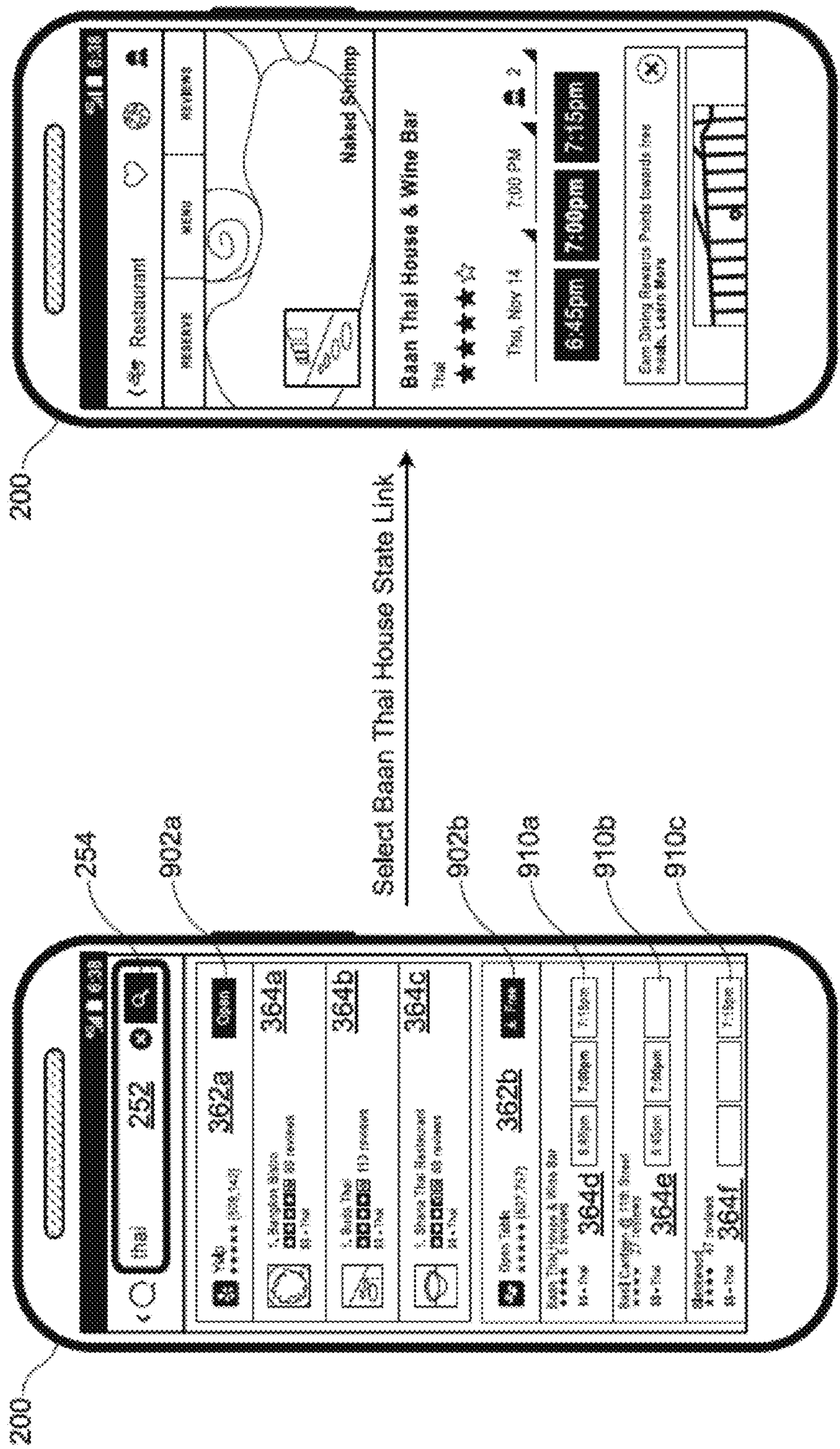


FIG. 9B

FIG. 9A



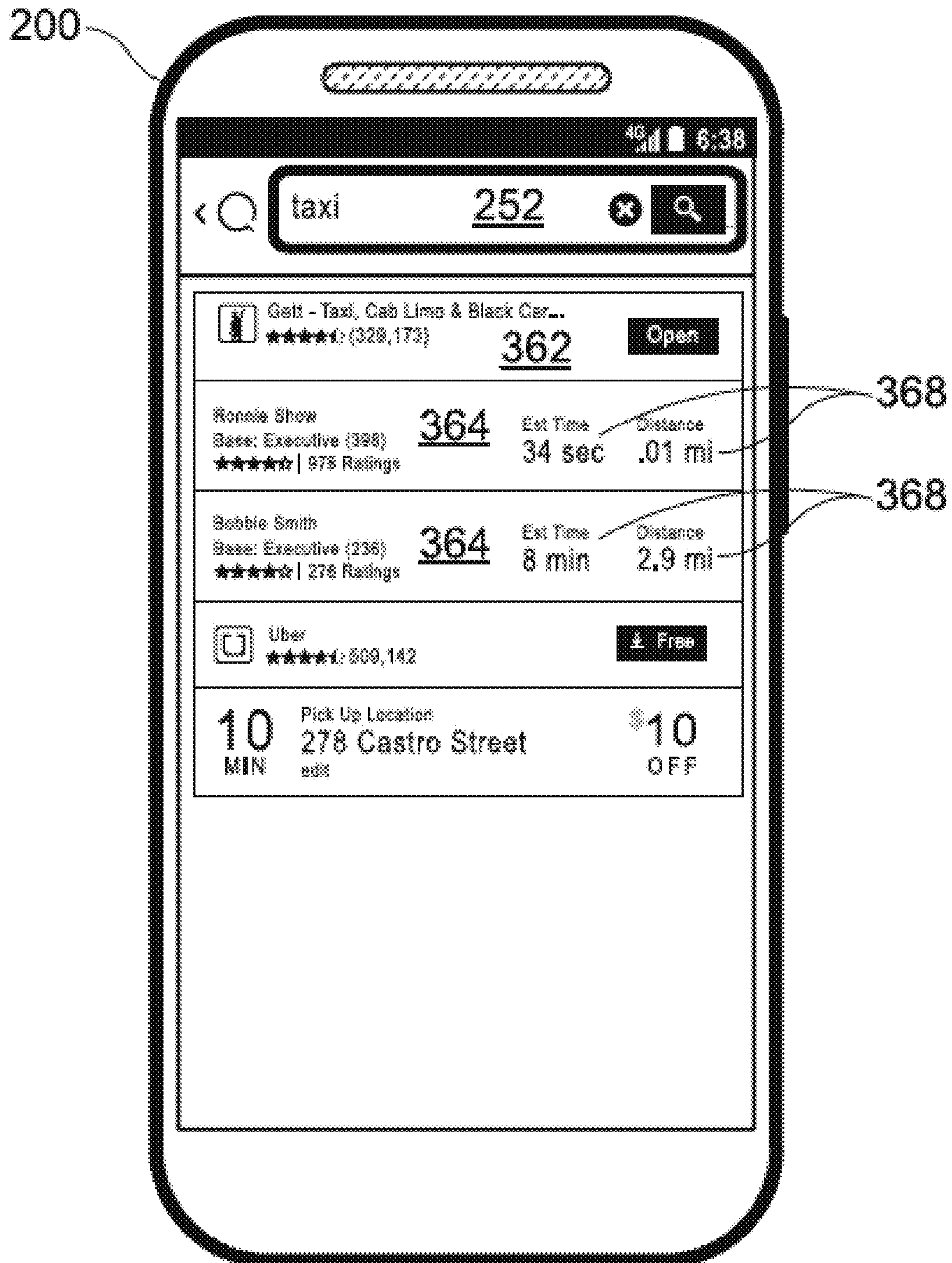
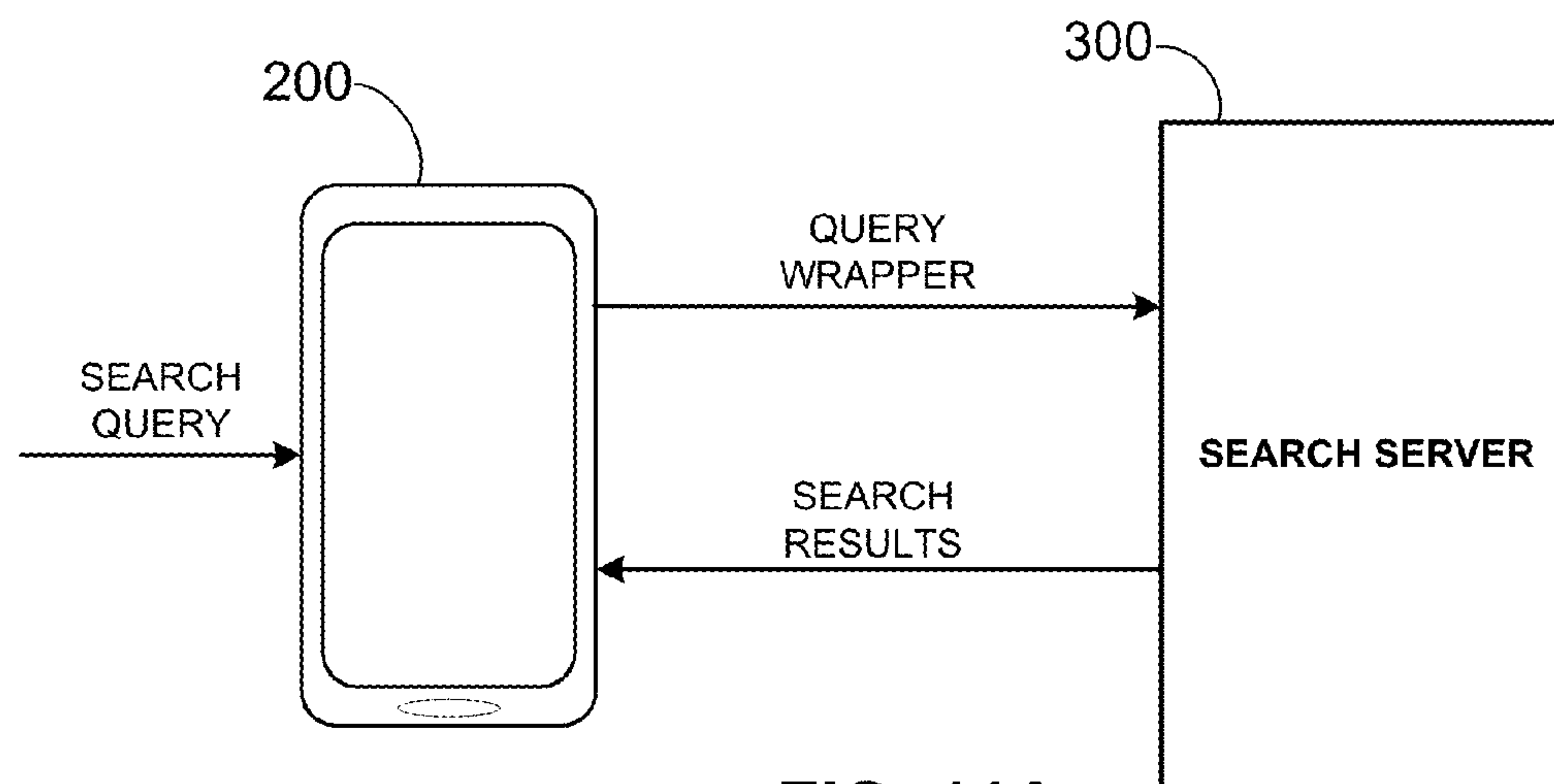
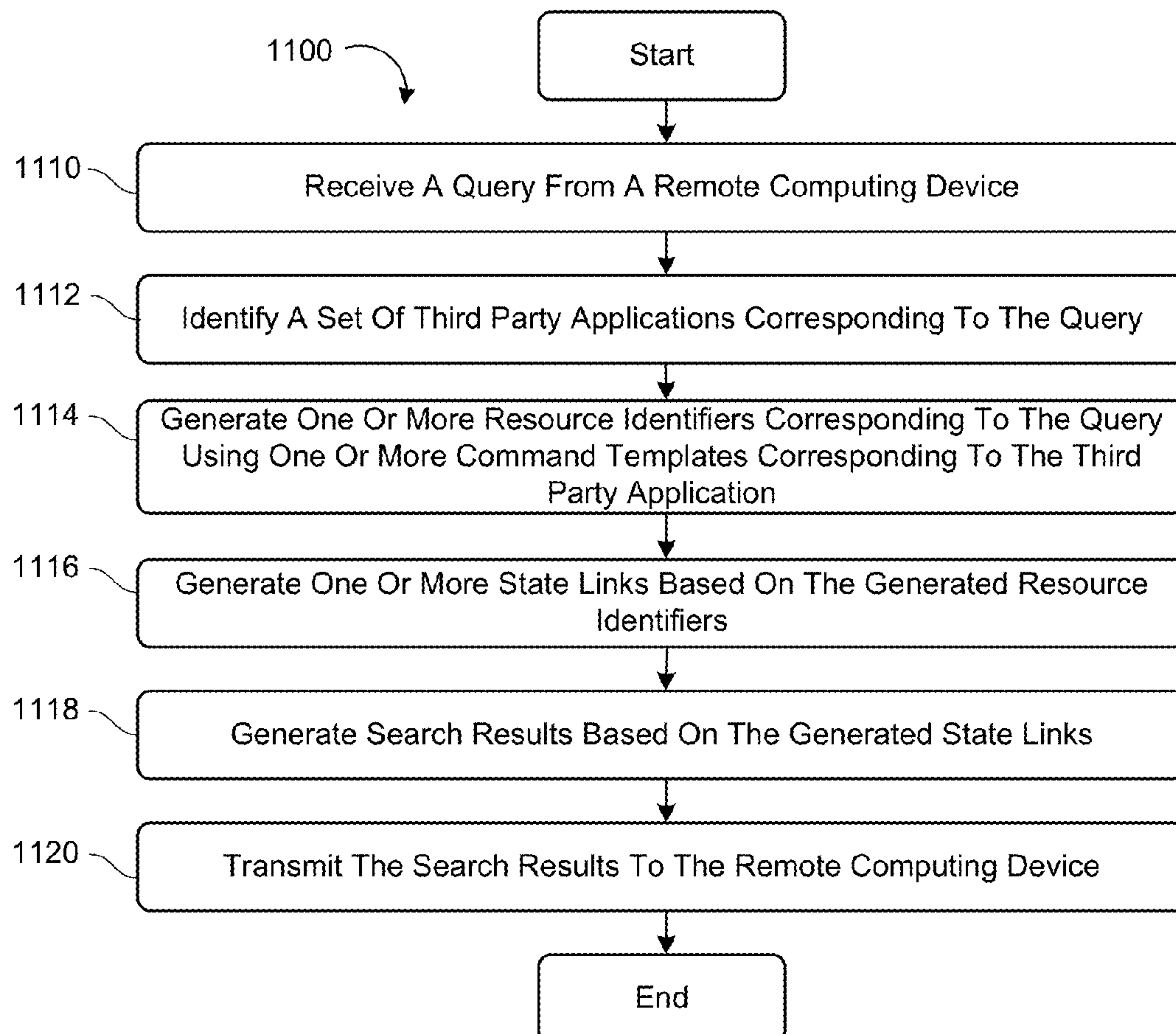


FIG. 10

**FIG. 11A****FIG. 11B**

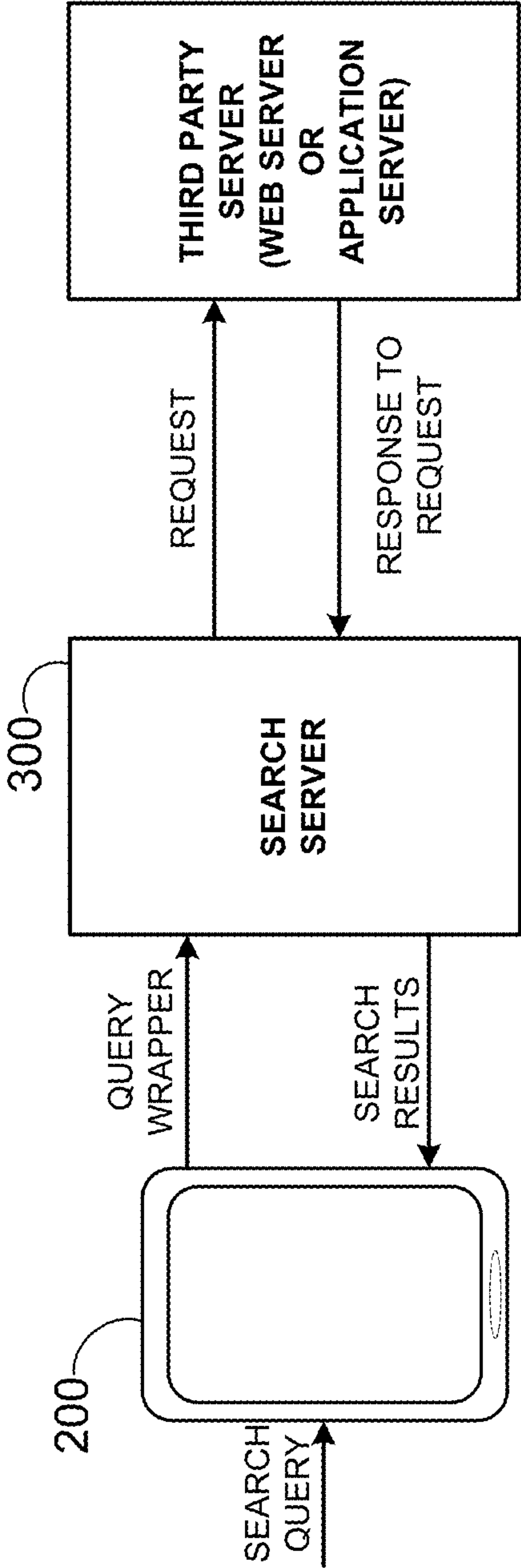
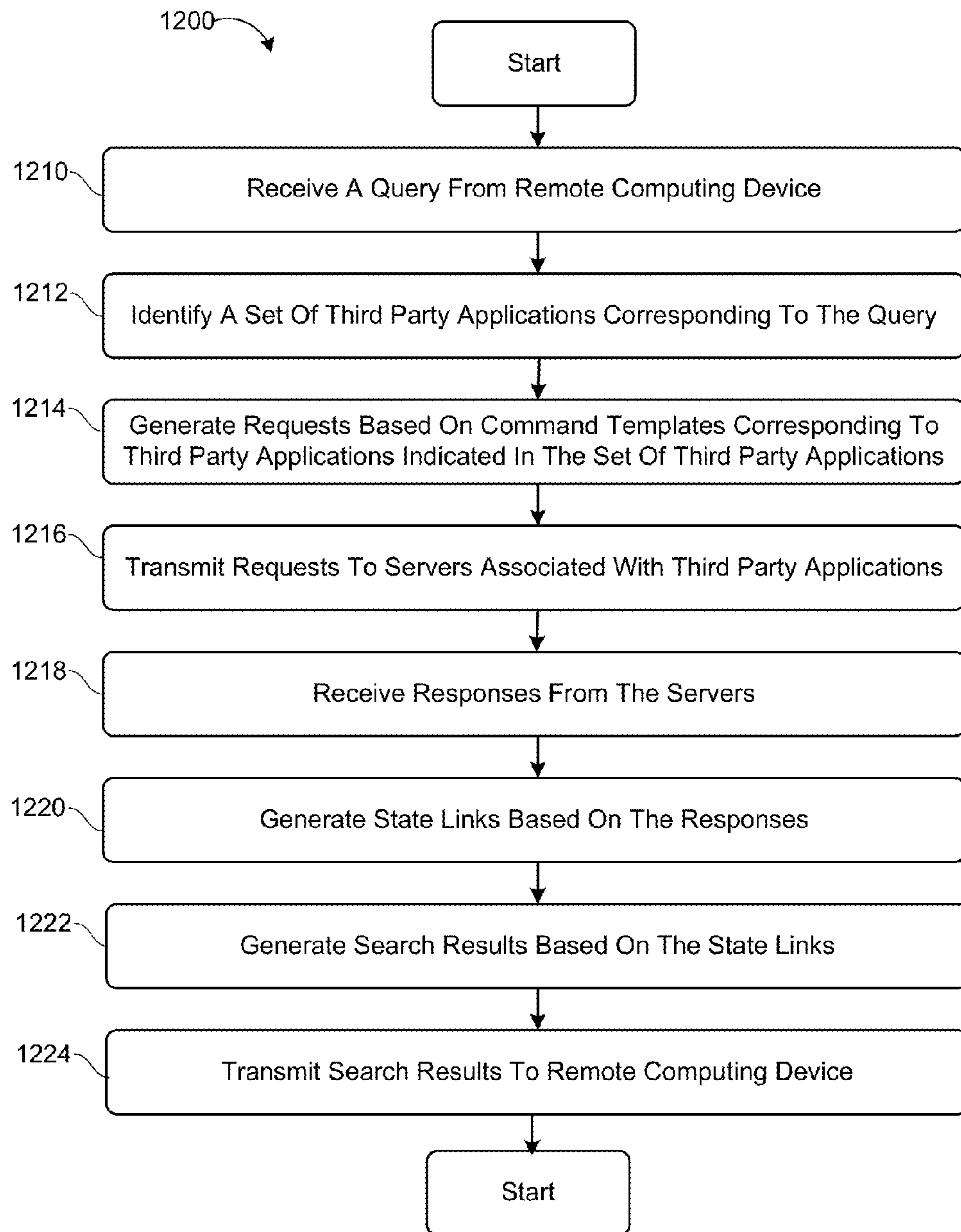


FIG. 12A

**FIG. 12B**



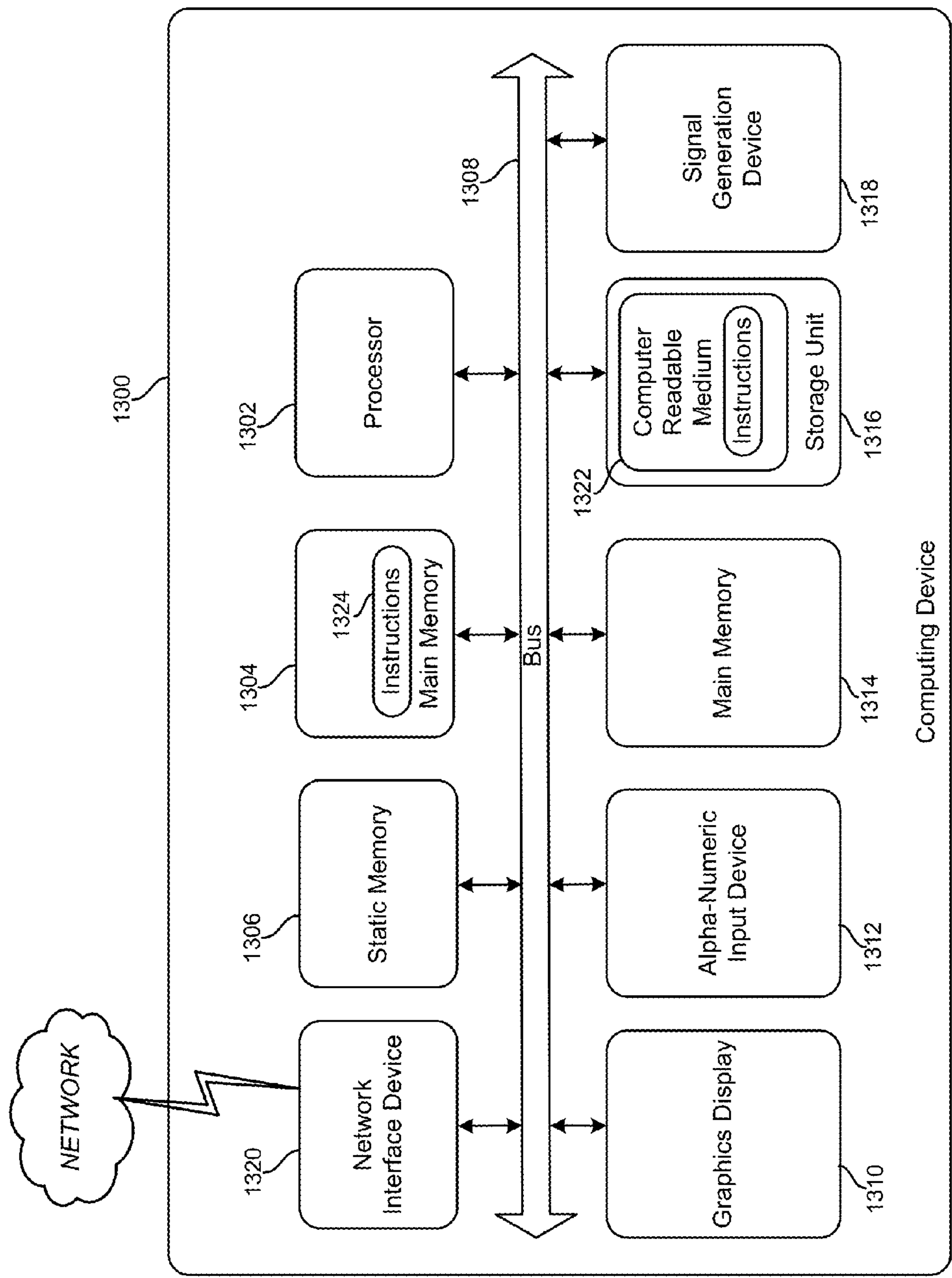


FIG. 13

## 1

# GENERATING SEARCH RESULTS CONTAINING STATE LINKS TO APPLICATIONS

## CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/195,709, filed on Mar. 3, 2014 and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/195,643, filed on Mar. 3, 2014, which claim the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/924,032, filed on Jan. 6, 2014 and U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/771,614, filed on Mar. 1, 2013. The entire disclosures of the applications referenced above are incorporated by reference.

## FIELD

This disclosure relates to the field of search in computing environments. In particular, this disclosure relates to generating search results containing state links to applications.

## BACKGROUND

The World Wide Web (the "Web") contains endless information and it continues to experience an explosive growth of information. Users access the information via web browsers which allow the users to view web pages containing the information. Due to the increasing number of webpages, web search engines became available to aid users in finding specific information. Most search engines perform three main functions: crawling, indexing, and searching. A web crawler is an automated web browser used to retrieve information from web pages. Once the web crawler collects the information on each web page, the information is then indexed in the search engine database. Indexing parses and stores the information gathered by the web crawler to expedite the retrieval of information. The searching process is initiated when a user enters a search query into the search engine. The search engine references its index and provides the results of the best matched web pages according to the provided query.

## SUMMARY

One aspect of the disclosure provides a method for generating search results containing state links to applications. The method includes receiving a search query from a remote computing device, generating a state link to a state of a native application based on the search query and providing the state link to the remote computing device, all by a processing device. In some implementations, the state link is provided to the remote computing device with one or more other state links to third party applications. In some implementations, the native application is a third party native application. The native application can correspond to a third party application having one or more versions. The state link can include an application resource identifier corresponding to the native application and is used to access the state in the native application version of the third party application.

Implementations of the disclosure may include one or more of the following features. In some implementations, the state link further includes a web resource identifier being used to access a web application corresponding to the third party application at the same state of the third party appli-

## 2

cation. The state link may include one or more other application resource identifiers.

In some examples, determining the state link includes determining an application resource identifier based on the search query and embedding the application resource identifier into the state link. Additionally or alternatively, the native application may correspond to a third party application. The third party application has one or more versions including the native application. Determining the application resource identifier may include generating a request to a server associated with the third party application based on the search query, receiving a response from the server associated with the third party application and generating the application resource identifier based on the response. The response may include a web resource identifier to access a web application version of the third party application at the state. Generating the application resource identifier may include converting the web resource identifier to the application resource identifier using a conversion rule.

In some implementations, determining the application resource identifier includes identifying a command template corresponding to the native application and generating the application resource identifier based on the command template and the search query. The command template indicates the native application and includes one or more parameter fields that receive state parameters.

Another aspect of the disclosure provides a search server. The search server includes a network interface device and a processing device. The processing device executes computer readable instructions. When the instructions are executed by the processing device, the instructions cause the processing device to receive a search query from a remote computing device via the network interface device, generate a state link to a state of a native application based on the search query and provide the state link to the native application to the remote computing device. The state link may be provided to the remote computing device with one or more other state links to the third party application. The native application is a third party native application. The native application corresponds to a third party application having one or more versions. The state link includes an application resource identifier corresponding to the native application and is used to access the state in the native application version of the third party application. The state link further includes a web resource identifier being used to access a web application corresponding to the third party application at the same state of the third party application. The state link includes one or more other application resource identifiers.

In some implementations, the computer readable instructions cause the processing device to determine the state link by determining an application resource identifier based on the search query and embedding the application resource identifier into the state link. The native application can correspond to a third party application. The third party application can have one or more versions including the native application. In some implementations, the computer readable instructions cause the processing device to determine the application resource identifier by generating a request to a server associated with the third party application based on the search query, receiving a response from the server associated with the third party application, and generating the application resource identifier based on the response.

In some examples, the response includes a web resource identifier to access a web application version of the third party application at the state. In some implementations, the computer readable instructions cause the processing device



3

to generate the application resource identifier by converting the web resource identifier to the application resource identifier using a conversion rule. The computer readable instructions cause the processing device to determine the application resource identifier by identifying a command template corresponding to the native application and generating the application resource identifier based on the command template and the search query. The command template indicates the native application and includes one or more parameter fields that receive state parameters.

Another aspect of the disclosure provides a method for generating search results containing state links to applications. The method includes receiving a query containing one or more query parameters from a remote computing device and identifying a set of third party applications corresponding to the one or more query parameters, all by a processing device. For each third party application, the method includes transmitting at least a subset of the one or more query parameters to a server associated with the third party application, receiving a response from the server associated with the third party application, and generating a state link to a native application version of the third party application based on the response. The method further includes providing the states links to the remote computing device. The one or more query parameters include a search query including one or more query terms. The one or more query parameters further include one or more of a geolocation of the remote computing device, an operating system of the remote computing device, or an identifier of a user of the remote computing device.

In some examples, the state link provides access to a state of a native application version of the third party application. In some implementations, the state link includes a screen shot indicative of the state. In some implementations, the state link includes an application resource identifier indicating a reference to the native application version and one or more state parameters corresponding to the state. The one or more state parameters can be used by the native application to access the state. Additionally or alternatively, the state link may include a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server associated with the third party application and the one or more state parameters. The web server hosts a web application version of the third party application.

In some examples, transmitting the query parameters includes transmitting at least a subset of the one or more query parameters to a web server that hosts a web application that is a web application version of the third party application. Transmitting the query parameters may further include selecting a command template corresponding to the third party application from a plurality of command templates, formatting an outgoing request based on the command template and at least a subset of the one or more query parameters and transmitting the outgoing request to the web server.

In some implementations, receiving the response includes receiving a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server associated with the third party application and one or more state parameters corresponding to a state of the web application that are used by the web application to access the state. Determining the state link to the native application includes converting the web resource identifier to an application resource identifier indicating a reference to the native application version of the third party application and the one or more state parameters. The remote computing device is configured to use the application resource identifier to launch the native application to the

4

state indicated by the one or more state parameters. The remote computing device is configured to receive the state link and to attempt to access the state on the native application version using the application resource identifier before attempting to access the web application version using the web resource identifier.

Yet another aspect of the disclosure provides a search server for generating search results containing state links to applications. The search server includes a network interface device and a processing device. The processing device executes computer readable instructions, that when executed by the processing device, cause the processing device to receive a query containing one or more query parameters from a remote device and identify a set of third party applications corresponding to the one or more query parameters. For each third party application, the processing device transmits at least a subset of the one or more query parameters to a server associated with the third party application, receives a response from the server associated with the third party application, and generates a state link to a native application version of the third party application based on the response. The processing device provides the state links to the remote computing device. The one or more query parameters include a search query including one or more query terms. The one or more query parameters can further include one or more of a geolocation of the remote computing device, an operating system of the remote computing device, or an identifier of a user of the remote computing device.

In some implementations, the state link provides access to a state of a native application version of the third party application and provides the state link to the remote computing device. In some implementations, the state link includes an application resource identifier indicating a reference to the native application version and one or more state parameters corresponding to the state. The one or more state parameters are can be used by the native application to access the state. Additionally or alternatively, the state link may further include a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server associated with the third party application and the one or more state parameters. The web server hosts a web application version of the third party application. The computer readable instructions cause the processing device to transmit the query parameters by transmitting at least a subset of the one or more query parameters to a web server that hosts a web application that is a web application version of the third party application. In some implementations, the state link includes a screen shot indicative of the state.

In some examples, the computer readable instructions further cause the processing device to transmit the query parameters by selecting a command template corresponding to the third party application from a plurality of command templates, formatting an outgoing request based on the command template and at least a subset of the one or more query parameters and transmitting the outgoing request to the web server. Additionally or alternatively, the computer readable instructions may cause the processing device to receive the response by receiving a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server associated with the third party application and the one or more state parameters corresponding to a state of the web application that are used by the web application to access the state.

In some implementations, the computer readable instructions further case the processing device to determine the state link to the native application by converting the web resource identifier to an application resource identifier indi-



5

catating a reference to the native application version of the third party application and the one or more state parameters. The remote computing device is configured to use the application resource identifier to launch the native application to the state indicated by the one or more state parameters. In some scenarios, the remote computing device may be configured to receive the state link and to attempt to access the state on the native application version using the application resource identifier before attempting to access the web application version using the web resource identifier.

Yet another aspect of the disclosure provides a method for generating search results containing state links to applications. The method includes receiving a query containing one or more query parameters from a remote computing device and identifying a set of third party applications corresponding to the one or more query parameters. For each third party application, the method includes selecting a command template corresponding to the third party application from a plurality of command templates, generating a resource identifier corresponding to the third party application based on the command template and at least a subset of the one or more query parameters, and generating a state link based on the resource identifier. The method further includes providing the state links to the remote computing device, all by the processing device. The one or more query parameters include a search query including one or more query terms, and may include one or more of a geolocation, an operating system, or an identifier of the remote computing device. The command template is selected based on a functionality implicated in the query, and may be formatted to leverage a specific functionality of the third party application.

The remote computing device can be configured to access the third party application using the state link. In some examples, the resource identifier is a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server that hosts a web application version of the third party application. The web resource identifier can include one or more state parameters corresponding to the at least the subset of the query parameters. In some implementations, the web resource identifier may be a uniform resource locator. The resource identifier may be an application resource identifier indicating a native application version of the third party application. The application resource identifier can further include one or more state parameters corresponding to the at least the subset of the query parameters.

In some implementations, the state link includes at least one application resource identifier and at least one web resource identifier. The remote computing device can be configured to receive the state link and to attempt to access the state on the native application version using the application resource identifier before attempting to access the web application version using the web resource identifier. In some implementations, the state link includes a screen shot indicative of the state.

Yet another aspect of the disclosure provides a search server for generating search results containing state links to applications. The search server includes a network interface device and a processing device that executes computer readable instructions. When the instructions are executed, the processing device receives a query containing one or more query parameters from a remote computing device and identifies a set of third party application corresponding to the one or more query parameters. For each third party application, the processing device selects a command template corresponding to the third party application from a plurality of command templates, generates a resource identifier cor-

6

responding to the third party application based on the command template and at least a subset of the one or more query parameters, and generates a state link based on the resource identifier. The processing device provides the state links to the remote computing device. The command template can be selected based on a functionality implicated in the query and may be formatted to leverage a specific functionality of the third party application. The remote computing device can be configured to access the third party application using the state link.

In some scenarios, the resource identifier is a web resource identifier indicating a domain name of a web server that hosts a web application version of the third party application. The web resource identifier can further include one or more state parameters corresponding to the at least the subset of the query parameters.

In some scenarios, the resource identifier is an application resource identifier indicating a native application version of the third party application. The application resource identifier can further include one or more state parameters corresponding to the at least the subset of the query parameters.

In some implementations, the state link may include at least one application resource identifier and at least one web resource identifier. The remote computing device is configured to receive the state link and to attempt to access the state on the native application version using the application resource identifier before attempting to access the web application version using the web resource identifier. The state link may include a screen shot indicative of the state.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate an example system for performing searches.

FIG. 2 illustrates an example set of components of the remote computing device.

FIG. 3 illustrates an example set of components of the search server.

FIGS. 4A and 4B illustrate example sets of operations for a method for transmitting query parameters to servers associated with one or more third party applications.

FIG. 5 illustrates an example set of operations for a method for processing a query from a remote computing device.

FIG. 6 illustrates an example set of operations for a method for processing a query from a remote computing device.

FIGS. 7A-10 illustrate various examples of searches that can be performed on a remote computing device.

FIGS. 11A and 11B illustrate an example set of operations for a method for processing a query.

FIGS. 12A and 12B illustrate an example set of operations for a method for processing a query.

FIG. 13 illustrates one embodiment of components of an example machine able to read instructions from a machine-readable medium and execute them in a processor (or controller).

Like reference symbols in the various drawings indicate like elements.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The Figures and the following description relate to preferred embodiments by way of illustration only. It should be noted that from the following discussion, alternative embodiments of the structures and methods disclosed herein



will be readily recognized as viable alternatives that may be employed without departing from the principles of what is claimed.

Reference will now be made in detail to several embodiments, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying figures. It is noted that, wherever practicable, similar or like reference numbers may be used in the figures and may indicate similar or like functionality. The figures depict embodiments of the disclosed system (or method) for purposes of illustration only. One skilled in the art will readily recognize from the following description that alternative embodiments of the structures and methods illustrated herein may be employed without departing from the principles described herein.

FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate an example system 10 for performing searches. The system 10 includes a search server 300 in communication with one or more remote computing devices 200 via a network 110. The remote computing devices 200 can refer to, for example, a mobile computing device (e.g., a smartphone 200a or a tablet computer 200b), a stationary computing device 200c (e.g., a desktop computer or laptop device), wearable computers, video game consoles, smart appliances, and/or any other suitable device that includes a user interface and a network interface device. The search server 300 can also communicate with application servers 120 and web servers 130 via the network 110. The search server 300 and the remote computing devices 200 are further described below. The term “server” may refer to computing devices that primarily serve client devices, such as remote computing devices 200 or other servers. Furthermore, while FIGS. 1A and 1B depict a standalone server, the search server 300 may be a collection of devices at one or more data centers. These devices may work independently or in a distributed manner. Although FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate one of each respective device type, the system 10 can include any number and/or combination of devices.

In operation, a remote computing device 200 can execute, at least in part, a search application 214 that displays a graphical user interface (GUI) 250 that allows a user to enter search queries 262. A search query 262 is a query parameter that the remote computing device 200 provides to the search server 300, which the search server 300 uses to determine search results 360. For example, the user may enter a search query 262 into a search bar 252 (e.g., a search box) of the GUI 250 using a touchscreen keypad, a mechanical keypad, and/or via speech recognition. A search query 262 may include one or more query terms. A query term may refer to a word, number, and/or symbol in the search query 262. The user can interact with the GUI 250 of the search application 214 to transmit the search query 262 to the search server 300. For example, with respect to FIG. 1B, a user can enter the search query 262 (i.e., “Late Night Diners”) and select (e.g., touch or click) a search button 254 of the GUI 250 in order to transmit the search query 262 to the search server 300.

In some examples, the remote computing device 200 (e.g., the search application 214) may transmit additional query parameters 264 to the search server 300 along with the search query 262. The additional query parameters 264 can include, for example, platform data (e.g., device type, operating system version, web-browser version, a list of native application installed on the remote computing device 200), geo-location data (e.g., the location of the remote computing device 200), an identity of a user of the remote computing device 200 (e.g., a username), user preferences (e.g., user’s language preference, user’s location preferences, whether

the user prefers free applications or pay applications, user’s browsing history) partner specific data, and/or other suitable data. In some implementations, the search application 214 can bundle the search query 262 and the additional query parameters 264 into a query wrapper 260. A query wrapper 260 can contain the query parameters 262, 264 in a format defined by a schema implemented by the search server 300. In some implementations, one or more of the additional query parameters 264 may be stored on a cache of the search server 300, such that the additional query parameter 264 can be looked up upon receipt of the query wrapper 260. The search server 300 can use one or more of the query parameters 262, 264 included in the query wrapper 260 to generate the search results 360.

The search application 214 may be implemented as a client web application (e.g., a web browser), a native application, and/or a part of the operating system. A “native application” is an application that is executed, at least in part, by the processing device of a remote computing device 200. A “web application” is an application that is executed, at least in part, by a web server 130 and accessed by a remote computing device 200 via a web browser of the remote computing device 200. In some examples, a search application 214 is an application that the party associated or affiliated with the search server 300 develops to provide remote user computing devices 200 access to the search capabilities of the search server 300.

In some implementations, the search application 214 is configured to communicate with a partner device 140. The partner device 140 receives query parameters 262, 264 from a remote computing device 200, which the partner device 140 provides to the search server 300. The search server 300 provides the search results 360 to the partner device 140. The partner device 140 can communicate the search results 360 to the remote computing device 200. The partner device 140 may further process the search results 360 or add content to the search results 360 (e.g., advertisements, visual indicators, and/or additional result objects 362).

The search server 300 receives the search query 262 and/or the other query parameters 264 and determines a set of search results 360 corresponding to the search query 262 and/or the other query parameters 264. The search results 360 can include one or more result objects 362. A result object 362 can refer to data that is provided to the remote computing device 200 that can be displayed by the remote computing device 200. A result object 362 corresponding to a third party application can include one or more state links 364 to a state of the third party application, one or more visual indicators 366 corresponding to the third party application (e.g., an icon of the third party application, a logo or image of an entity corresponding to the state of the third party application, and/or a screen shot of the third party application), and other data 368 corresponding to the third party application (e.g., rankings, ratings, and/or descriptions corresponding to the third party application and/or the entity corresponding to the state of the third party application).

A state link 364 can refer to an object that includes text and/or images that a user may select (e.g., touch) via a user interface of the remote computing device 200. The remote computing device 200 displays the state link 364 and in some implementations, renders the state link 364. Each user selectable state link 364 may include one or more resource identifiers 365 for accessing a specific state of a third party application. A resource identifier 365 is a string of letters, numbers, and/or characters that can reference a particular state of the third party application. Types of resource identifiers include web resource identifiers 365a and application



resource identifiers **365b**. Web resource identifiers **365a** (e.g., URLs) can be used to access states of web applications. A web resource identifier **365a** can include a reference to a domain of a web server **130** that serves the web application and one or more state parameters that the web server **130** uses to access a particular state of the application. Application resource identifiers **365b** can be used to access states of native applications. An application resource identifier **365b** can include a reference to a native application to be launched by the remote computing device **200** and one or more state parameters that can be used by the remote computing device **200** to access a particular state of the application.

A state link **364** can include one or more application resource identifiers **365b** and a web resource identifier **365a**, such that when a user selects a state link **364**, the remote computing device **200** can launch a native application to a state referenced in the application resource identifier **365b** and/or access a web application at a state indicated by the web resource identifier **365a**. The text and/or images of a state link **364** displayed to a user may indicate the state of the application that will be accessed in response to selection of the state link **364**. For example, if the state link **364** is to a song in a music playing application, the text and/or images may identify the song that will be played by the music playing application when the user selects the state link **364**.

In the example of FIG. 1B, the user has entered the search query “Late Night Diners.” In response to the search query **262** and possibly one or more additional parameters **264** (e.g., geo-location of the remote computing device **200**, operating system type, username, list of native applications installed on the remote computing device, and/or language preferences of the user), the search server **300** returns search results **360** that include a first result object **362a** corresponding to the YELP® application. The YELP® application is an application that provides crowd-sourced reviews and ratings of various establishments as well as information specific to the establishments (e.g., hours of operation, contact information, and location). Each establishment may have an entry within the application, whereby users can view the ratings, reviews, and any other information regarding the establishment by searching for the establishment or by location. The result object **362a** includes state links **364** to three different states of the YELP® native application. The state links **364** include a first state link **364a** to a state corresponding to a first entry for an INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PANCAKES® restaurant or IHOP®, a second state link **364b** to the state corresponding to a second entry for a DENNY’S® restaurant, and a third state link **364c** to a state corresponding to a third entry for a TACO BELL® restaurant. Each state link **364** can include one or more resource identifiers **365** that allow the remote computing device **200** to access the YELP® application at a state indicated by the one or more resource identifiers **365**. For example, the state link **364a** corresponding to IHOP® can include one or more application resource identifiers **365b**, whereby each application resource identifier **365b** corresponds to a different native application version of the YELP® application (e.g., an iOS version and an ANDROID® version), but correspond to the same state (e.g., an entry for the IHOP® restaurant). The state link **364a** can also include a web resource identifier **365a** that corresponds to a web application version of the YELP® application and corresponds to the same state (e.g., the entry for the IHOP® restaurant).

The user can select (e.g., press or touch) one of the state links **364**, and in response to the selection, the remote computing device **200** can access the state indicated by

resource identifiers **365** embedded in the state link **364**. In some scenarios, the remote computing device **200** can launch a native application indicated by an application resource identifier **365b** embedded in the state link **364** at the state indicated by the application resource identifier **365b**. For example, if the user selects the first state link **364a**, the remote computing device **200** can attempt to launch the YELP® native application and access an entry for an IHOP® indicated by the state link (e.g., an entry for an IHOP® restaurant located near the geo-location of the remote computing device **200**) using an application resource identifier **365b** embedded in the state link **364a**. If the remote computing device **200** is unable to launch the YELP® native application (e.g., the native application is not installed on the remote computing device **200**), the remote computing device **200** can access the YELP® web application via a web browser application of the remote computing device **200** using the web resource identifier **365a** embedded in the state link **364a**. The search results **360** of FIG. 1B and the manner by which the search results **360** are displayed are provided for example only.

In operation, the search server **300** receives the search query **262** and/or the query parameters **264** and identifies one or more third party applications that are relevant to the search query **262** and/or the query parameters **264**. The search server **300** generates resource identifiers **365** to specific states of the third party applications which are likely relevant to the search query **262** and/or the query parameters **264**. The state links **364** included in a result object **362** are based on the resource identifiers **365** that are generated by the search server **300**.

A third party application can refer to an application developed by a party that is unaffiliated with the search server **300**. In some implementations, the third party application can include one or more native applications and one or more web applications which all provide the same or similar functionality. For example, a third party application for a music player that allows users to share playlists and song recommendations may include a “pay” version of the native application for the APPLE® iOS operating system, a “free” version of the native application for the APPLE® iOS operating system, a “pay” version of the native application for the ANDROID® operating system, and a “free” version of the native application for the ANDROID® operating system. The third party application may also include a mobile web application and a full-version web application that can be accessed by a web browser on a mobile remote computing device **200a** and/or a desktop remote computing device **200c**. All of the different versions may have overlapping functions and may be classified under the third party application.

The search server **300** can parse and process the query wrapper **260** to identify third party applications that are relevant to the query parameters **262**, **264**. As discussed herein, the search query **262** may include query terms that identify or otherwise implicate a name of a third party application, a desired functionality, or an entity. The search server **300** can perform one or more types of searches to determine a set of third party applications based on the query parameters **262**, **264**. For example, if the search server **300** receives the query “make a reservation at French Laundry at 7:00 PM,” the search server **300** can identify that “French Laundry” has an entity type of restaurant and process the rest of the query terms to determine that the user desires functionality that allows the user to make reservations. The



## 11

search server **300** can then identify a set of third party applications that can be utilized to make restaurant reservations.

In some implementations, the search server **300** is configured to forward one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264** to a server associated with the third party application. More specifically, the search server **300** can transmit the one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264** to a server associated with the third party application to leverage a specific functionality of the third party application. A functionality of a third party application can refer to a particular task that the third party application is configured to perform or particular information that the third party application is configured to provide. For example, a functionality of a third party application may be to provide geo-coordinates on a map, to search for a particular song in a music library of a third party application, to find the price of, and book, an airline ticket to a destination from a source location, or to search for reviews of near-by restaurants. Thus, if the third party application is a review application that is centered around a searching platform (e.g., the third party application returns information and crowd-sourced reviews for various establishments), the search server **300** may provide one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264** to a web server **130** or application server **120** of the review application to receive reviews corresponding to the one or more query parameters **262**, **264**. The search server **300** can forward the query parameters **262**, **264** to leverage the functionality of a third party application using a schema implemented by the third party to implicate the functionalities thereof.

Once the search server **300** has determined a set of third party applications that are relevant to the query **262**, the search server **300** can generate requests according to each third party application's schema, which it can send to each respective third party application (e.g., a web server **130** or an application server **120**). The third party application can provide a response to the request to the search server **300**. The response can include the information indicating the requested data (e.g., one or more webpages showing search results), one or more resource identifiers **365** indicating where the requested data can be accessed, and/or one or more state parameters that respectively indicate one or more states of the third party application where the requested data can be accessed. In this way, the indicated state can be accessed at a later time without having to repeat the query. As used herein, the state of a third party application can refer to a particular page or screen of the third party application (e.g., a particular page of a web application or a particular screen of a native application). Further, the state of the third party application may be dependent on a set of state parameters. For instance, if a third party application displays search results for a particular set of query terms, the state of the third party application is a function, at least in part, of the query terms. Thus, a state of a web application can be referenced by a domain name of the web application and the state parameters that correspond to the particular state. A state of a native application can be accessed using the name of the third-party application and the state parameters corresponding to the state.

In some implementations, the search server **300** is further configured to provide a post execution view of a state of third party applications. In some implementations, the post execution view is a screen shot of either a native application or a web application at the state. The screen shot can be provided with the state link **364** in the result object **362**, such that a user can see the state of the third party application. In some implementations, the post-execution view is a graphi-

## 12

cal user interface **250** that is displayed to the user, such that the user can access the specific functionality defined in the state.

FIG. 2 illustrates an example set of components of a remote computing device **200**. The remote computing device **200** can include a processing device **210**, a network interface **220**, a storage device **230**, and a user interface device **240**. The remote computing device **200** can include additional components not depicted in FIG. 2 (e.g., accelerometer, sensors, GPS module).

The processing device **210** includes memory (e.g., RAM and/or ROM) that stores computer readable instructions and one or more processors that execute the computer readable instructions. In implementations where the processing device **210** includes more than one processor, the processors can execute in a distributed or individual manner. The processing device can execute an operating system **212**, a search application **214**, a web browser application **216**, and one or more other native applications **218**. The operating system **212** acts as an interface between higher level applications **214**, **216**, **218** and the processing device **210**.

The network interface **220** includes one or more devices that are configured to communicate with the network **110**. The network interface **220** can include one or more transceivers for performing wired or wireless communication. Examples of the network interface **220** can include, but are not limited to, a transceiver configured to perform cellular communications (e.g., transmission using the third generation (3G) or fourth generation (4G) telecommunications standards), a transceiver configured to perform communications using the IEEE 802.11 wireless standard, an Ethernet port, a wireless transmitter, and a universal serial bus (USB) port.

The storage device **230** can include one or more computer readable mediums that store data. The storage device **230** can store some or all of the computer readable instructions that define the search application **214**, the web browser application **216**, and the one or more other native applications **218**. The storage device **230** can store other data as well (e.g., media contents, application data, contacts, documents).

The user interface device **240** can include one or more devices that allow a user to interact with the remote computing device **200**. The user interface device **240** can include one or more of, for example, a touchscreen, a QWERTY keyboard, a display device, speakers, a touchpad, and a microphone. The user interface device **240** receives input from the user and provides the input to the processing device **210**. The user interface device **240** receives output from the processing device **210** and outputs the output to the user.

The web browser application **216** is an application that requests web data from a web browser and displays the data on the user interface device **240**. The web browser application **216** can be used to access web applications. In some implementations, the web browser application **216** can access a specific state of a web application by accessing the web server **130** located in the domain portion of a web resource identifier **365b** and providing a request to the web server **130** using the state parameters indicated in the path portion of the web resource identifier **365b**. Web applications can provide any suitable functionality.

The native applications **218** are applications that are executed, in part, by the processing device **210**. Native applications **218** can be developed by third parties and made available to consumers in a variety of manners. For instance, a user can download a native application to the remote computing device **200** from an application retail store (e.g.,



13

from GOOGLE PLAY® developed by Google Inc., the APP STORE® developed by Apple Inc.) or from a website associated with the third party. Additionally or alternatively, the user can load a native application into the storage device **230** of the remote computing device **200** from a removable media, such as a CD-ROM. Native applications **218** can provide any suitable functionality. Examples of native applications can include, but are not limited to, word processing applications, messaging applications, media streaming applications, social networking applications, e-reader applications, and games.

The search application **214** presents a graphical user interface **250** (GUI) that allows a user to enter a search query **262** and displays search results **360**. In some implementations, the GUI **250** can display a search bar **252** whereby the user can provide text and/or speech input into the search bar **252**. Additionally, or alternatively, the operating system **212** of the remote computing device **200** can display the search bar **252** on the home screen of the remote computing device **200**, whereby a user can enter the search query **262** directly from the home screen. In these implementations, when the user enters the search query **262** into the search bar **252** displayed on the home screen and executes the search, the operating system **212** of the remote computing device **200** can launch the search application **214**.

When the user executes a search query **262** (e.g., by pressing the search button **254**), the search application **214** can generate a query wrapper **260** that contains the search query **262** and any other query parameters **264**. The search application **214** can obtain the other query parameters **264** in any suitable manner. For example, the search application **214** can obtain information regarding the device (e.g., device type, operating system type, operating system version) from a file in the storage device **230** or in the memory of the processing device **210**. Additionally or alternatively, the search application **214** can obtain information regarding the device from a sensor or component of the remote computing device **200** (e.g., the geo-location can be obtained from a GPS module of the remote computing device **200**). The search application **214** can create a query wrapper **260** based on the provided search query **262** and the obtained query parameters **264**.

The search application **214** transmits the query wrapper **260** to the search server **300**, which responds with the search results **360**. The search application **214** displays the search results **360** in the GUI **250** of the search application **214**. As previously discussed, the search application **214** can display state links **364** to access resources that are relevant to the query parameters **262**, **264**. The state links **364** can include application resource identifiers **365b** that can be used to launch a third party application and access a specific state within the third party application. When the user selects a state link **364**, the search application **214** can initiate the accessing of the third party application at the specific state. In some implementations, the search application **214** attempts to launch a native application **218** version of a third party application. To initiate launching the native application **218** to the specific state, the search application **214** provides an instruction to launch the third party application to the operating system **212** using the information provided in the state link **364**. The operating system **212** can attempt to launch a native application **218** indicated by an application resource identifier **365b** in the state link **364**, and if unsuccessful, can attempt to access the third party application via the web browser application **216** (i.e., leverage the web application version of the third party application).

14

FIG. 3 illustrates an example set of components of the search server **300**. The search server **300** can include a processing device **310**, a network interface **320**, and a storage device **330**. The search server **300** may include additional components not explicitly shown in FIG. 3. The search server **300** can be implemented as a single device or a collection of devices (e.g., rack mounted servers). The search server **300** may be located at a single location (e.g., at a single data center) or at multiple locations (e.g., multiple data centers).

The processing device **310** includes memory (e.g., RAM and/or ROM) that stores computer readable instructions and one or more processors that execute the computer readable instructions. In implementations where the processing device **310** includes more than one processor, the processors can execute in a distributed or individual manner. The processing device can execute one or more of a search module **312**, a forwarding module **314**, a linking module **316**, a viewing module **318** and a results module **319**. The processing device **310** may further execute an operating system (not shown) that acts as an interface between the one or more modules **312**, **314**, **316**, **318**, **319** and the processing device **310**.

The network interface **320** includes one or more devices that can perform wired and/or wireless (e.g., WiFi or cellular) communication. Examples of the network interface device **320** include, but are not limited to, a transceiver configured to perform communications using the IEEE 802.11 wireless standard, an Ethernet port, a wireless transmitter, and a universal serial bus (USB) port.

The storage device **330** can include one or more computer readable mediums that store data. The storage device **330** can store some or all of the computer readable instructions and other suitable data. In some implementations, the storage device stores one or more of an application data store **332**, an entity data store **334**, and a command template data store **336**.

The application data store **332** may include one or more databases, indices (e.g., inverted indices), files, or other data structures storing this data. The application data store **332** includes application data of different third party applications. The application data of an application may include one or more of keywords associated with the application, reviews associated with the application, the name of the developer of the application, the platform of the application, the price of the application, application statistics (e.g., a number of downloads of the application and/or a number of ratings of the application), a category of the application, and other information. The application data store **332** may include metadata for a variety of different applications available on a variety of different operating systems. The search module **312** may retrieve and analyze the application data from the application data store **332** in order to perform application searches and to provide search results **360**.

In some implementations, the application data store **332** stores the application data in application records **340**. Each application record **340** can correspond to a third party application and may include the application data pertaining to the third party application. An example application record **340** includes an application name, an application identifier, and other application features. The application record **340** may generally represent the application data stored in the application data store **332** that is related to the third party application.

The application name may be the name of the third party application represented by the data in the application record **340**. Example application names may include "FACE-



BOOK®,” “TWITTER®,” “MICROSOFT® Word,” or “ANGRY BIRDS®.” The application identifier (hereinafter “application ID”) identifies the application record **340** amongst the other application records **340** included in the application data store **332**. In some implementations, the application ID may uniquely identify the application record **340**. The application ID may be a string of alphabetic, numeric, and/or symbolic characters (e.g., punctuation marks) that uniquely identify the third party application represented by the application record **340**. In some implementations, the application ID is the ID assigned to the application by a retail site (e.g., APP STORE® or GOOGLE PLAY®) that offers the application. In other implementations, the search server **300** assigns application IDs to each third party application when creating an application record **340** for the third party application.

The application features of a third party application may include any type of data that may be associated with the third application represented by the application record **340**. The application features may include a variety of different types of metadata. For example, the application features may include structured, semi-structured, and/or unstructured data. The application features may include information that is extracted or inferred from documents retrieved from other data sources (e.g., application retail sites, application developers, blogs, and reviews of applications) or that is manually generated (e.g., entered by a human).

The application features may include the name of the developer of the application, a category (e.g., genre) of the application, a description of the application (e.g., a description provided by the developer), a version of the application, the operating system the application is configured for, and the price of the application. The application features further include feedback units provided to the application. Feedback units can include ratings provided by reviewers of the application (e.g., four out of five stars) and/or textual reviews (e.g., “This app is great”). The application features can also include application statistics. Application statistics may refer to numerical data related to the application. For example, application statistics may include, but are not limited to, a number of downloads, a download rate (e.g., downloads per month), and/or a number of feedback units (e.g., a number of ratings and/or a number of reviews). The application features may also include information retrieved from websites, such as comments associated with the application, articles associated with the application (e.g., wiki articles), or other information. The application features may also include digital media related to the application, such as images (e.g., icons associated with the application and/or screenshots of the application) or videos (e.g., a sample video of the application).

In some implementations, an application record **340** can group one or more application editions under a canonical application structure. The term canonical application structure can refer to a group of similar application editions. Put another way, the canonical application structure may be a representative or umbrella under which the one or more application editions are organized. Each application edition in a group of application editions that are organized under the same canonical application structure respectively indicates a version of a third party application that is functionally similar to other versions of the third party application editions organized under the canonical application structure. In other words, the application editions can represent different versions of the same third party application. Examples of edition applications are different release versions of an application (e.g., beta, 1.0, or 2.0), different language ver-

sions of an application (e.g., English, Russian, or Chinese), different platform versions of an application (e.g., iOS or ANDROID®), different functional characteristics (e.g., a light version, an advanced user version), different aesthetic characteristics (e.g., a holiday themed version), and different resolution versions of an application (e.g., standard definition or high definition). Third party applications which are related but not similar (e.g., sequels in a series of games or a different release of a serial application) are typically not classified under the same canonical application. For example, ANGRY BIRDS® may be a separate canonical application from ANGRY BIRDS® STAR WARS®. Although the applications may have a same underlying concept, they are treated as separate games (i.e., third party applications).

The entity data store **334** may include one or more databases, indices (e.g., inverted indices), files, or other data structures. The entity data store **334** stores one or more entity indexes **342**. Each entity index **342** indexes a plurality of entity records **344**. Each entity record **344** has an entity type. An entity type defines one of a plurality of various categories that are referenced in the entity data store **334**. Non-limiting examples of entity types include “airport,” “movie,” “TV show,” “actor,” “musician,” “band,” “song,” “album,” “restaurant,” “city,” “country,” “person,” “medicine,” “symptom,” and “time.” Each entity record **344** represents a different entity. Each entity represents a species of a specific entity type. For example, the term “Toy Story” may be of the entity type “movie,” MCDONALDS® may be of the entity type “restaurant” and/or “fast food restaurant,” and “the Beatles” may be of an entity type “band.” In some implementations, each entity type has a corresponding entity index **342**. An entity data store **334** can be built off-line and/or can be continuously updated. In some examples, the entity index **342** is human curated, which may use existing data sources, such as FREEBASE® or WIKIPEDIA® to build the entity data store **334**. Curators can define the entity types manually and the data sources may be crawled to index all the various entities. Each entity type may have a particular record format corresponding thereto. For example, an entity record **344** for a restaurant entity may be: {entity-TypeId:1, typeName:“Restaurant”, fields:[“name”, “food-Type”]}. In this case, restaurant is an entity type name. The entity data store **334** may further include an application configuration database (not shown) that contains an application reference record for each entity-supporting application (e.g., third party applications). Each application reference record includes a name or application ID of a third party application and which entity type or types that a particular third party application supports. For example, an application reference record corresponding to IMDB® (Internet Movie Database) may support movie entities, TV show entities, and actor entities. Similarly, an application reference record for the YELP® application may support restaurant entities, retail store entities, or other establishment related entities.

The command template data store **336** stores a plurality of command templates **346** for different third party applications. A command template **346** may be a template defining a manner by which one or more state parameters are accepted by a third party application. In some implementations, the command templates **346** for a third party application include request command templates **346c** that are used to generate requests that are sent to servers associated with third party applications. A request can refer to a communication that is provided to a resource (e.g., a web server **130** or application server **120**) requesting a particular



function. Additionally or alternatively, the command templates **346** for a third party application can include command templates **346a**, **346b** for generating resource identifiers **365**. The command templates **346** can be human curated or provided by the developer of the third party application. Furthermore, in some implementations, the command templates **346** implemented by a third party application can be determined by parsing and analyzing the code of a third party application (e.g., the HTML code of the web application) to identify the schema implemented by the third party application and the various parameters that are accepted by the third party application.

According to some implementations, a web application command template **346a** of a particular third party application is a template for generating a web resource identifier **365a** to access a particular state or states of a web application (e.g., a URL). In some implementations, a web resource identifier **365a** can indicate a domain name of a web server **130** that executes a web application version of a third party application and one or more state parameters that define a state of the web application. For example, a web resource identifier **365a** may be a uniform resource locator (URL), such that a first portion of the URL is the domain name, and a second portion of the URL is a tail that indicates a path defining one or more state parameters that can be used to access a specified state of the web application. A web browser uses a web resource identifier **365a** to access the state of the third party application indicated therein by sending a web request to the web server **130** referenced by the domain name, whereby the web request includes the state parameters arranged in a manner defined in the web application command templates **346a** and/or schema. For example, a web request corresponding to the URL: “http://www.example.com/find?q=al+pacino&s=all” may be transmitted in an HTTP request to the server located at an address corresponding to www.example.com, and the state parameters can be included in the tail portion: “find?q=al+pacino&s=all.” In this example, the response to the web resource identifier **365a** would include a web page that shows search results (**360**) resulting from the query terms “Al Pacino.” A web application command template **346a** can define a domain name of the web server **130** of the web application (e.g., “www.domain.com”) and a path that identifies parameter fields that receive parameters and the order by which parameters are accepted by the webserver **130** (e.g., “/<param\_type\_1>&<param\_type\_2>”, where param\_type\_1 and param\_type\_2 are the types of parameters accepted by the web server **130** located at http://www.domain.com). Each web application can have one or more corresponding web command templates **346a**. In another example, a web application command template **346a** for a third party application may take the form: “http://www.domain.com/search?find\_desc=<query\_terms>&find\_loc<loc>”. In this example, the web command template **346a** includes two parameter fields: <query\_terms>, which takes search query terms; and <loc> which takes in a location (e.g., city, state, and/or country).

According to some implementations, a native application command template **346b** of a particular third party application is a template for generating an application resource identifier **365b**. An application resource identifier **365b** is a string of letters, numbers, and/or characters that corresponds to a state of a native application **218**. A native application **218** can parse an application resource identifier **365b** to provide access to a state of the application. The application resource identifier **365b** identifies the native application **218**.

In some scenarios, the application resource identifier **365b** includes one or more state parameters that correspond to the state of the application. The one or more state parameters can be used by the native application **218** to access the state. An application resource identifier **365b** can instruct the operating system **212** of a remote computing device **200** to launch a native application **218** based on a domain portion of the application resource identifier **365b** that references the native application **218** and to access a particular state of the native application **218** based on a tail portion that includes one or more state parameters that define a state of the native application **218**. When an application resource identifier **365b** is selected by a user of a remote computing device **200**, the remote computing device **200** launches the application and accesses the state therein. A native application command template **346b** can include a domain portion that identifies the native application **218** (e.g., “example\_app”) and a tail portion that identifies parameter fields that receive parameters and the order by which parameters are accepted by the native application **218** and/or an application server **120** (e.g., “::<param\_type\_1>: <param\_type\_2>”, where param\_type\_1 and param\_type\_2 are the types of parameters accepted by the native application **218** “example\_app”). Each native application **218** can have one or more corresponding native application command templates **346b**. In another example, a native application command template **346b** for a third party native application may take the form: “example\_app::search?find\_desc=<query\_terms>&find\_loc<loc>”. In this example, the native application command template **346b** includes two parameter fields: <query\_terms>, which takes search query terms; and <loc> which takes in a location (e.g., city, state, and/or country).

The command template data store **336** may further store an association table for each third party application having command templates **346** stored in the command template data store **336**. An association table of a third party application can associate the different entity types that are stored in the entity data store **334** with the parameter fields that the third party application accepts. For example, if a third party application receives a location and a restaurant entities query in the form of <loc> and <rest\_name>, respectively, the association table may associate location entities to <loc> and restaurant entities to <rest\_name>.

In operation, the search module **312** receives query parameters **262**, **264** and identifies a set of third party applications corresponding to the query parameters **262**, **264**. The search module **312** is configured to perform any type of suitable search. In some implementations, the search module **312** can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, and a name search.

A functional search is a search for applications providing a particular functionality. Functional searching is different than name searching or keyword searching in that functional searching usually aims to identify applications that provide a desired task, function, or feature (e.g., find restaurant, take me to downtown, where to find the best burger) instead of specific keywords. For example, a functional search term may be “make video calls to friends overseas,” compared to a name search of “SKYPE®.” In this example, the query does not include the term “SKYPE®,” and the description of the SKYPE® application does not mention the word “friends” or “overseas.” Therefore, traditional keyword searches might not identify the SKYPE® application as being relevant. As the SKYPE® application allows users to place video and voice calls across the world, a functional



search would likely identify the SKYPE® application in response to the “make video calls to friends overseas” query parameter 262.

Functional searching may include searching for a third party application across multiple platforms or constrained to certain platforms (e.g., ANDROID® only). By way of example, in one embodiment a platform can be a hardware architecture and/or software framework, the combination of which allows the software to run. Some examples of platforms include, but are not limited to, ANDROID®, BLACKBERRY® OS, MICROSOFT WINDOWS® Mobile, APPLE MAC OS®, APPLE iOS®. Functional searching can be supported by the application data store 332. The application data store 332 includes data from multiple third party sources such as, but not limited to, blogs, application review sites, application catalogs, and/or application developers. Due to the different sources included in the functional database, functional searching leverages the multiple data sources and analyzes both the textual and non-textual features and provides the user with a list of the best available applications based on his/her inputted query terms. The application data store 332 merges the information that it gathers from the different sources and combines the information based on different version or editions of the same application, providing a more comprehensive analysis. The application data store 332 is indexed for faster retrieval of the data entries.

Operationally, the search module 312 can receive a query wrapper 260 from a remote computing device 200. The search module 312 can process the query parameters 262, 264 contained in the query wrapper 260. The search module 312 may perform various processing operations on the query parameters 262, 264. For example, analysis operations performed by the search module 312 may include, but are not limited to, tokenization of the query parameters 262, 264, filtering of the query parameters 262, 264, stemming the search query 262, synonymization of the query parameters 262, 264, and stop word removal. In some implementations, the search module 312 may further generate one or more subqueries based on the query parameters 262, 264. Subqueries are search queries that are based on some subcombination of the search query 262 and the other query parameters 264.

The search module 312 identifies a consideration set of applications (e.g., a list of applications) based on the query parameters 262, 264 and, in some implementations, the subqueries. In some examples, the search module 312 may identify the consideration set by identifying applications that correspond to the query parameters 262, 264 or the subqueries based on matches between terms in the query parameters 262, 264 (and/or the subqueries) and terms in the application data of the application (e.g., in the application record 262 of the application). For example, the search module 312 may identify one or more applications represented in the application data store 332 based on matches between terms or tokens representing the query parameters 262, 264 and terms or tokens included in the application records 340 of those applications. The consideration set may include a list of application IDs and/or a list of application names.

The search module 312 performs a variety of different processing operations on the consideration set. In some implementations, the search module 312 may generate a result score for each of the applications included in the consideration set. In some examples, the search module 312 may cull the consideration set based on the result scores of the applications contained therein. For example, the subset

may be those applications having the greatest result scores or have result scores that exceed a threshold. The result objects 362 included in the search results 360 may depend on how the search module 312 calculates the result scores. For example, the result scores may depend on any combination of the relevance of an application to the query parameters 262, 264, the popularity of an application in the marketplace, the ratings of an application, and other properties of the application.

The search module 312 may generate result scores for applications in a variety of different ways. In general, the search module 312 may generate a result score for an application based on one or more scoring features. The scoring features may be associated with the application and/or the query parameters 262, 264. An application scoring feature may include any data associated with an application. For example, application scoring features may include any of the application features included in the application record 340 or any additional features related to the application, such as data indicating the popularity of an application (e.g., number of downloads) and the ratings (e.g., number of stars) associated with an application. A query scoring feature may include any data associated with the query parameters 262, 264. For example, query scoring features may include, but are not limited to, a number of terms in the search query 262, the popularity of the search query 262, and the expected frequency of the terms in the search query 262. An application-query scoring feature may include any data, which may be generated based on data associated with both the application and the query parameters 262, 264 (e.g., the query parameters 262, 264 that resulted in identification of the application record 340 by the search module 312). For example, application-query scoring features may include, but are not limited to, parameters that indicate how well the terms of the query match the terms of the identified application record 340. The search module 312 may generate a result score for an application based on at least one of the application scoring features, the query scoring features, and the application-query scoring features.

The search module 312 may determine a result score based on one or more of the scoring features listed herein and/or additional scoring features not explicitly listed. In some examples, the search module 312 may include one or more machine learned models (e.g., a supervised learning model) configured to receive one or more scoring features. The one or more machine learned models may generate result scores based on at least one of the application scoring features, the query scoring features, and the application-query scoring features. For example, the search module 312 may pair the query parameters 262, 264 with each application and calculate a vector of features for each (query, application) pair. The vector of features may include application scoring features, query scoring features, and application-query scoring features. The search module 312 may then input the vector of features into a machine-learned regression model to calculate a result score that may be used to rank the applications in the consideration set. The search module 312 can then rank the applications indicated in the consideration set based on the result scores. Additionally or alternatively, the search module 312 can cull the applications indicated in the consideration set based on the result scores. The output of the functional search is a set of third party applications based on the consideration set. The foregoing is an example of how a result score is calculated. Some implementations may calculate the result score in a different manner.



## 21

Additionally or alternatively, the search module 312 executes an entity search. An entity search is a search that attempts to identify the types of entities referenced in a query, and in some cases, to identify third party applications that are relevant to those entities. The search module 312 can include the results of the entity search in the set of third party applications and/or can utilize the results to enhance the results produced by the functional search. Entity searches are supported by the entity data store 334.

In operation, the search module 312 receives the query parameters 262, 264 and initiates an entity search. The search module 312 provides a database request to the entity data store 334 that includes one or more of the terms of the query parameters 262, 264. When one or more terms are listed in the entity data store 334, the entity data store 334 returns the entity types of the matched terms. The search module 312 can then determine which third party applications are relevant to the returned entity types based on the application reference records. The search module 312 may be further configured to score each entity type/third party application match by estimating a probability of whether the entity match is a good match. The search module 312 can use heuristic techniques to score the entity type/third party application match. The search module 312 can rank the matched applications based on the calculated scores. The matched applications can be included in the set of third party applications. Additionally or alternatively, once the search module 312 has scored the applications, the results (e.g., list of applications and corresponding scores) of the entity search can be provided as a signal to the functional search process. In these implementations, the functional search process can use the entity search results (360) as a signal for determining the results scores of the applications in the consideration set.

In an example of an entity search, the query parameters 262, 264 may contain the terms "Toy Story." The search module 312 can identify "Toy Story" in the entity data store 334, which can be associated with one or more entity types. For example, "Toy Story" may be identified as a movie entity. The search module 312 can then identify third party applications that are related to movie entities. In this example, the search module 312 can identify the IMDB® application, the NETFLIX® application, and the ROTTEN TOMATOES® application as third party applications that support movie entities. Thus, these third party applications may be indicated in the set of third party applications and/or may be used to calculate the result scores of applications indicated in the consideration set identified during the functional search process.

In some implementations, the search module 312 can store identified entities in the query parameters 262, 264 for later use. In these implementations, the stored entities can be used to send requests to a web server 130 or application server 120 or to generate one or more resource identifiers 365.

In some implementations, the search module 312 is further configured to perform name searches. A name search is a search for third party applications having a name that is explicitly included in the query terms. The search module 312 can determine whether any of the terms in the search query 262 match to a name of an application represented in the application data store 332. If so, the search module 312 can include the third party application defined by the application representation to the set of third party applications. The foregoing search techniques are provided for example only.

## 22

The forwarding module 314 is configured to forward one or more of the query parameters 262, 264 to servers of the third party applications identified by the search module 312. In some implementations, the forwarding module 314 determines a web server 130 and/or an application server 120 associated with each third party application. In these implementations, the forwarding module 314 can obtain a request command template 346c corresponding to the third party application for transmitting a request to the web server 130 and/or the application server 120. The forwarding module 314 can obtain the request command templates 346c of the third party application from the command template data store 336. Based on the request command template 346c and the one or more query parameters 262, 264, the forwarding module 314 formats an outgoing request. The request command template 346c can be based on the schema which is implemented by a particular third party application to receive and process requests. Each third party application may accept different parameter types and different syntaxes for expressing parameters in requests that are provided to the third party application. Thus, a schema implemented by a third party application can define how it expects to receive requests, whereby each command template can be defined to leverage a specific functionality of the third party application.

The forwarding module 314 can generate an outgoing request by inserting one or more of the query parameters 262, 264 that were extracted from the query wrapper 260 into the command template 346c. As discussed, the search module 312 can determine the entity type of at least a subset of the query parameters 262, 264. Furthermore, by identifying the command templates 346c of a particular third party application, the forwarding module 314 can understand the parameter types that are included in each particular command template 346c of the third party application. The forwarding module 314 can utilize an association table between entity types and parameter types to determine which query parameters to include in the outgoing request. For instance, a third party application for making restaurant reservations may accept the following command template: "http://www.ex\_res\_app.com/

ex.aspx?d=<date>&t=<time>&r=<name>" and the query may have included the following query terms: "French Laundry," the current date, and "9:00 P.M." In this example, the search module 312 determines that "French Laundry" is most likely a restaurant entity, the current date is likely a date entity, and "9:00 P.M." is most likely a time entity. Thus, the forwarding module 314 can generate the request URL

"http://www.ex\_res\_app.com/ex.aspx?d=<FEB28>&t=<2100>&r=<French\_Laundry>" based on the command template 346c referenced above. The forwarding module 314 can transmit the request to the web server 130 (or application server 120) corresponding to the third party application. In this way, the forwarding module 314 leverages the reservation making functionality of the third party application. While a request URL is shown in the example above, the request may have any other suitable format, such as an API call to the server of the third party application.

The third party application processes the request, as it would any other request from a remote computing device 200, and returns a response corresponding to the request. For example, if the third party application is an online retailer that allows consumers to search for brands or types of clothing, the third party application may return a response indicating items of clothing that are sold by a retailer



associated with the third party application, whereby the items indicated in the response correspond to the parameters included in the request.

The response from the third party application may include a resource identifier **365**. For example, a web server **130** may respond to a web request. The response may include the requested data and web resource identifier **365a** and/or an application resource identifier **365b** that indicates where the requested data may be found. For example, if a third party application is an application for making restaurant reservations, a server of the third party application may receive a request indicating a restaurant name, a time, and a day. In response, the server **120**, **130** may return a response indicating whether making a reservation is possible at the specified date and time and/or a resource identifier **365** (e.g., web resource identifier **365a** or an application resource identifier **365b**) to a state of the third party application that allows the user to make the reservation.

The linking module **316** receives responses from the third party applications (i.e., from web servers **130** and/or application servers **120** of the third party applications) and generates state links **364** to the third party applications based on the responses received from each respective third party application. The linking module **316** includes the state links **364** in the result objects **362** that are provided to the remote computing device **200** as part of the search results **360**. In some implementations, the linking module **316** receives web resource identifiers **365a** from web servers **130** associated with each of the third party applications. For each web resource identifier **365a**, the linking module **316** can generate a state link **364** that includes one or more web resource identifiers **365a** and/or one or more application resource identifiers **365b**. The linking module **316** can be configured to convert a web resource identifier **365a** to an application resource identifier **365b**. For example, the linking module **316** may utilize conversion rules for converting from a web resource identifier **365a** to an application resource identifier **365b**. Conversion rules can be specific to specific third party applications (e.g., a first conversion rule may apply to a first third party application, while a second conversion rule can apply to a second third party application). A conversion rule can define how to convert a domain name in the web resource identifier **365a** to a reference to a native application **218** that is included in the application resource identifier **365b**. A conversion rule can further define how to convert the state parameters appearing in the web resource identifier **365a** to the state parameters that are included in the application resource identifier **365b**.

Additionally or alternatively, the linking module **316** can generate state links **364** to particular states of third party applications using one or more command templates corresponding to the third party applications indicated in the set of third party applications (identified by the search module **312**), one or more of the terms contained in the query parameters **262**, **264**, and in some cases, one or more entities and entity types identified by the search module **312**. In some implementations, the linking module **316** obtains the one or more command templates **346** from the command template data store **336** for each third party application indicated in the set of third party applications and, in some cases, the entity types determined by the search module **312**. For example, for a third party application that allows a user to make restaurant reservations, the command templates **346** corresponding to the third party application may include command templates **346** for generating web resource identifiers **365a** and application resource identifiers **365b**. Each command template **346** may indicate the types of parameters

it receives. Using an association table that associates entity types to parameter types accepted by the third party application, the linking module **316** determines which entities can be entered in which parameter fields in each command template **346**. The linking module **316** then substitutes the identified entities for the parameter fields in the command templates **346**. In this way, for each third party application identified in the set of third party applications, the linking module **316** can generate one or more web resource identifiers **365a** and/or application resource identifiers **365b** that leverage one or more functionalities of the third party application without having to send a request to a web server **130** or application server **120** of the third party application.

The linking module **316**, for each set of resource identifiers **365** that correspond to a particular state, can imbed the set of resource identifiers **365** corresponding to a third party application in a state link **364**. In implementations where the state link **364** includes more than one resource identifiers **365** (e.g., one or more application resource identifiers **365b** and a web resource identifier **365a**), the linking module **316** can further include an instruction set with the state link indicating an order to access the resource identifiers **365**. For instance, the instruction set can instruct the remote computing device **200** to first attempt to launch the native application **218** indicated by an application resource identifier **365b** and, if unsuccessful, to access the web application via the web browser of the remote user computing device **200**. In some implementations, the instruction set is a script.

The viewing module **318** can determine a view of the state of the third party application, which can be provided to the remote computing device **200**. A view of the state of a third party application can be, for example, a graphical user interface (GUI) **250** of either a native application version or a web application version of the third party application. In some implementations, the viewing module **318** can, for example, access the web application at the determined state and capture a screen shot of the graphical user interface **250** of the web application at the state. In these implementations, the viewing module **318** can provide the screen shot to the linking module **316**, which provides the screen shot with the state link. In some implementations, the screen shot is only taken of a portion of the screen that corresponds to the functionality implicated by the query.

In some implementations, the viewing module **318** is configured to provide the remote computing device **200** access to the actual third party application (e.g., a native application version or a web application version of the third party application). In these implementations, the viewing module **318** analyzes the code of a web application or a native application **218** to identify a particular segment of the code that pertains to the desired function of a particular state of the application. The identified portion of the code can then be executed either at the web server **130**, the search server **300**, or at the remote computing device **200**, to provide the user with a functionality that is implicated by the query. To support these implementations, the web application may be written in a programming language that segments behaviors (e.g., specific functions) and presentation related to the associated behavior in modular blocks. In this way, the viewing module **318** can efficiently identify a modular block corresponding to a specific functionality or state, such that the viewing module **318** can provide the one or more query parameters **262**, **264** to the modular block, which is executed using the one or more query parameters **262**, **264**. This allows the remote computing device **200** to receive a view of a particular function of the web application or native application **218** at the desired state, and further, to interact



25

with the web or native application **218** (e.g., provide additional input and/or receive additional output).

The results module **319** generates the search results **360** and provides the search results (**360**) to the remote computing device **200** that provided the query. For each third party application in the set of third party applications, the results module **319** can generate a result object **362** for the third party application. The result object **362** can include one or more state links **364** to different states of the third party application. As previously discussed, each state link **364** can include an application resource identifier **365b** and/or a web resource identifier **365a**. Additionally or alternatively, the results module **319** can obtain visual indicators **366** corresponding to the third party application and can include the visual indicators **366** in the result object **362**. Examples of visual indicators **366** that can be included in a result object **362** of a third party application include, an icon of the third party application, a logo or image of an entity corresponding to the state of the third party application, and/or a screen shot of the third party application. Additionally or alternatively, the results module **319** can obtain other data **368** corresponding to the third party application and can include the other data **368** in the result object **362**. Examples of other data **368** corresponding to the third party application can include rankings, ratings, and/or descriptions corresponding to the third party application and/or the entity corresponding to the state of the third party application. The results module **319** can combine the result objects **362** into the search results **360** and transmit the search results **360** to the remote computing device **200**.

FIG. 4A illustrates an example set of operations for a method **400** for providing parameters to one or more third party applications. For purposes of explanation, the method **400** is described as being performed by the components of the search server **300**.

At operation **410**, the search module **312** receives a query (e.g., query wrapper **260**) from the remote computing device **200**. In some implementations, the query may be provided from the remote computing device **200** via a partner device **140**. As discussed, the query can include query parameters **262, 264**, including a search query **262** and other parameters **264** such as the location of the remote computing device **200** and/or an operating system **212** of the remote computing device **200**. The search module **312** parses the search query **262** to identify the query terms. Further, the search module **312** can perform natural language processing to extract features of the query terms. At operation **412**, the search module **312** can identify a set of one or more third party applications which correspond to the query based on the query parameters **262, 264** and/or the features of the query terms. As previously discussed, the search module **312** can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, and a name search to identify the set of third party applications.

At operation **414**, the forwarding module **314** transmits the query parameters **262, 264** to servers associated with each of the third party applications indicated in the set of third party applications. FIG. 4B illustrates an example method **430** for transmitting the query parameters **262, 264** to a server of a third party application. The method **430** can be repeated for each third party application indicated in the set of third party applications.

At operation **440**, the forwarding module **314** selects a command template **346** corresponding to the third party application. The forwarding module **314** can obtain one or more request command templates **346c** for generating requests from the command template data store **336**, which

26

can be indexed by the third party application. As previously discussed, the request command templates **346c** can be human curated, provided by the application developer of the third party application, or learned from the code of the third party application. The forwarding module **314** may further be required to select a specific request command template **346c** within the third party application, such that the specific request command template **346c** corresponds to the functionality implicated by the query. For example, if a third party application allows a user to request reviews of restaurants and to make restaurant reservations, the third party application may be configured to receive at least requests corresponding to two different request command templates **346c**. In some scenarios, the forwarding module **314** may select one or more of the request command templates **346c** based on the entity types of the query. For example, if the query parameters **262, 264** include a restaurant name, a date, and a time, the forwarding module **314** may select a command template **346** for making reservations at a restaurant. Alternatively, the forwarding module **314** can select any command template **346** of the third party application that defines parameter fields that correspond to the entity types implicated by the query parameters **262, 264**.

At operation **442**, the forwarding module **314** formats an outgoing request based on the command template **346** and the query parameters **262, 264**. The forwarding module **314** can insert the relevant query parameters **262, 264** into the parameter fields defined in the command template **346** to generate the outgoing request. The forwarding module **314** can utilize defined associations between entity types and the parameter types of the parameter fields in the request command template **346c** to populate the parameter fields. For instance, if the entity type of a query term associates to a parameter type, then the forwarding module **314** populates the parameter field with the query term.

At operation **444**, the forwarding module **314** can transmit the outgoing request to a server, e.g., web server **130** or application server **120**, associated with the third party application. The server associated with the third party application processes the request and provides results to the search server **300**.

The methods **400** and **430** of FIGS. 4A and 4B are provided for example and not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure. Variations of the methods are contemplated and within the scope of the disclosure.

FIG. 5 illustrates an example set of operations for a method **500** for processing a query from a remote computing device **200**. For purposes of explanation, the method **500** is described as being performed by the components of the search server **300**.

At operation **510**, the search module **312** receives the query (e.g., query wrapper **260**) from the remote computing device **200**. For purposes of explanation only, the remote computing device **200** is explained as being a remote computing device **200**. In some implementations, the query may be provided from the remote computing device **200** via a partner device **140**. As discussed, the query can include query parameters **262, 264**, including a search query **262** and other parameters **264** such as the location of the remote computing device **200** and/or an operating system **212** of the remote computing device **200**. The search module **312** parses the search query **262** to identify the query terms of the search query **262**. Further, the search module **312** can perform natural language processing to extract features of the query terms.

At operation **512**, the search module **312** can identify a set of one or more third party applications which correspond to



27

the query based on the query parameters **262**, **264** and/or the features of the query terms. As previously discussed, the search module **312** can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, and a name search to identify the set of third party applications.

At operation **514**, the forwarding module **314** transmits one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264** to servers associated with each of the set of third party applications. In some implementations, the forwarding module **314** can execute the method **430** described with respect to FIG. **4B** when transmitting the one or more query parameters **262**, **264**.

At operation **516**, the linking module **316** receives a response from each of the third party applications. The response may be received from, for example, a web server **130** that executes a web application version of the third party application. In this scenario, the response can include one or more web resource identifiers **365a**, each of which identifying the web server **130** and one or more state parameters that indicate a state of a web application version of the third party application. For example, the response can include one or more URLs that each indicates a domain name of the web server **130** and one or more state parameters that can be used to access a particular state of the third party application. In another example, the response may be received from an application server **120** that supports a native application version of the third party application. In this scenario, the application server **120** can return one or more application resource identifier **365b**, each identifying the native application **218** and one or more state parameters that indicate a state of the native application version of the third party application.

At operation **518**, the linking module **316** generates one or more state links **364** for each the third party application based on the respective responses received from the servers of the third party applications. As discussed above, the state link **364** can provide a mechanism to access a state of the native application version of the third party application and/or a state of the web application version of the third party application. In implementations where the response is received from a web server **130** of the third party application and includes a web resource identifier **365a**, the linking module **316** can convert the web resource identifier **365a** into one or more application resource identifiers **365b** based on one or more conversion rules. The linking module **316** may convert the web resource identifier **365a** into multiple application resource identifiers **365b** when the third party application includes more than one native application versions. In other implementations, the web server **130** or an application server **120** associated with the third party application may provide one or more application resource identifiers **365b** and one or more web resource identifiers **365a** in the response.

The linking module **316** embeds the one or more application resource identifiers **365b** in a state link **364**. The linking module **316** may further embed the web resource identifier **365a** in the state link **364** and an instruction set for accessing the application. The instruction set can instruct the remote computing device **200** to attempt to access the native application **218** before using the web browsing application **216** to access the web application. Additionally or alternatively, the instruction set can instruct the remote computing device **200** to launch a native application **218** indicated in the state link **365** and can further instruct the remote computing device **200** to input the state parameters into a graphical user interface **250** of the native application **218**.

28

At operation **520**, the results module **319** transmits the state links **364** for each of the third party applications to the remote computing device **200**. In some implementations, the results module **319** includes one or more state links **364** in a result object **362** corresponding to the third party application. The result processing module **319** can include additional data in each result object **362**, such as one or more visual indicators **366** and/or other data **368**. The result module **319** can include the resource object **362** in the search results **360** and can transmit the search results **360** to the remote computing device **200**.

The remote computing device **200** receives the state link **364** and can access the third party application by first attempting to launch the native application **218** indicated by the state link **364**. In doing so, the remote computing device **200** provides the one or more state parameters to the native application **218**, which may in turn provide the state parameters to an application server **120**. If unsuccessful in launching the native application **218**, the remote computing device **200** can access the web application indicated by the web resource identifier **365a** in the state link **364** using its web browser application **216**.

While the discussion above states for “each third party application,” reference to “each third party application” does not necessarily require all identified third party applications, but each third party application that provides relevant responses. The method **500** of FIG. **5** is provided for example and not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure. Variations of the method are contemplated and within the scope of the disclosure. For example, the viewing module **318** can capture a screen shot of the application (web application or native application **218**) at the state indicated by the one or more state parameters. The linking module **316** can include the screen shot in the result object **362**.

FIG. **6** illustrates an example set of operations for a method **600** for processing a query from a remote computing device **200**. For purposes of explanation, the method **600** is described as being performed by the components of the search server **300**. According to the implementations of FIG. **6**, the search server **300** generates one or more resource identifiers **365** to a third party application and a state link **364** containing the resource identifiers **365** without having to provide an outgoing request to a server associated with the third party application.

At operation **610**, the search module **312** receives a query from the remote computing device **200** containing query parameters **262**, **264**. At operation **612**, the search module **312** identifies a set of one or more third party applications that correspond to the query based on the query parameters **262**, **264**. The search module **312** can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, and a name search to identify the set of third party applications.

At operation **614**, the linking module **316** can determine one or more command templates **346** for each third party application in the set of third party applications. As was previously discussed, the command templates **346** of a third party application can be obtained from the command template data store **336**. The linking module **316** can obtain one or more web application command templates **346a** and one or more native application command templates **346b**. In some implementations, the linking module **316** can select the command templates **346** based on the entity types implicated by the query parameters **262**, **264**. In some implementations, the linking module **316** uses an association table corresponding to the third party application to identify the entity types that may be accepted as parameters by the third party application (i.e., the parameter types accepted by



the third party application). Based on the entity types implicated by the query parameters **262**, **264** and the parameter types accepted by the third party application, the linking module **316** can select one or more command templates **346** from the command template data store **336**. In this way, the linking module **316** retrieves one or more command templates **346** that leverage a particular functionality of the third party application. For instance, the linking module **346** can select one or more command templates **346** from a plurality of command templates **346** corresponding to the third party application based on the functionality that was implicated by the query parameters **262**, **264**. In this example, the selected command templates **346** can correspond to different versions of the third party application (e.g., a command template **346b** for iOS native application version, a command template **346b** for an ANDROID® native application version, and a command template **346a** for a web application version). Moreover, for each third party application, the linking module **316** can select multiple command templates **346** to leverage different functionalities of the third party application.

At operation **616**, the linking module **316** generates one or more resource identifiers **365** for each of the third party applications based on the retrieved command templates **346** and one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264**. For each command template **346**, the linking module **316** can substitute one or more of the query parameters **262**, **264** that are relevant to the command template **346** for the parameter fields defined in the command template **346**, as was described above. In some scenarios, the linking module **316** can substitute identified entities in the query parameters **262**, **264**, or the entire search query **262** itself for parameter fields defined in the respective command templates **346a**, **346b**. In this way, the linking module **316** can generate one or more application resource identifiers **365b** and/or one or more web resource identifiers **365a** corresponding to each third party application. In some scenarios, multiple application resource identifiers **365b** and/or multiple web resource identifiers **365a** can correspond to the same state of the third party application. Put another way, the multiple resource identifiers **365** may reference different versions of the third party application (e.g., IOS® version, ANDROID® version, free version, and/or pay version), but may all access the same state of the third party application.

At operation **618**, the linking module **316** can generate one or more state links **364** for each third party application. The linking module **316** generates a state link **364** to the third party application based on the generated resource identifiers **365**. The linking module **316** can insert an application resource identifier **365b** in a state link **364**. The linking module **316** may further include a web resource identifier **365a** in the state link **364** and an instruction set for accessing the application (e.g., attempt to access the native application **218** before using the web browsing application **216** to access the web application).

At operation **620**, for each of the third party applications, the linking module **316** communicates the state link **364** to the remote computing device **200**. In some implementations, the results module **319** includes each state link **364** corresponding to a third party application in a result object **362** corresponding to the third party application. The result processing module **319** can include additional data in each result object **362**, such as one or more visual indicators **366** and/or other data **368**. The result processing module **319** can include the resource object **362** for each third party application in the set of third party applications in the search

results **360** and can transmit the search results **360** to the remote computing device **200**.

While the discussion above states for “each third party application,” reference to “each third party application” does not necessarily require all identified third party applications, but each third party application that accepts a resource identifier **365** (web resource identifier **365a** and/or application resource identifier **365b**). The method **600** of FIG. **6** is provided for example and not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure. Variations of the method **600** are contemplated and within the scope of the disclosure.

FIGS. **7A-7B** illustrate an example of a search that is performed on a remote computing device **200**. In FIG. **7A**, a user has entered a search query **262** into a GUI **250** on the search application **214**. Specifically, the user has entered the search query **262** “Toy Story” into a search box **252** of the GUI **250**. In response to the search query **262**, the search application **214** generates a query wrapper **260** including the search query **262** and any other parameters **264** and transmits the query wrapper **260** to the search server **300**. For example, the user can select (e.g., touch or click) the search button **254** of the GUI **250** in order to initiate transmission of the query wrapper **260** to the search server **300**.

The search server **300** receives the query wrapper **260** and generates search results **360** based thereon. The search server **300** may transmit search results **360** including result objects **362** corresponding to a set of third party applications. In the illustrated example, the result objects **362** correspond to “IMDB®” (e.g., native and/or web application), “FANDANGO®” “CRACKLE®,” “FLIXSTER®,” and “ROTTEN TOMATOES®.” Each result object **362** may include one or more state links **364** corresponding to a relevant state of the application indicated in the search results **360**. A user may select (e.g., touch or click) one of the state links **364** to access the resource indicated in the state link **364**. In response to such a user selection, the search application **214** can instruct the operating system **212** to launch the selected third party application and to access the state of the third party application indicated in the state link **364**.

In the example of FIG. **7A**, the user selects the IMDB® state link **364a**. In the case of the IMDB® application, the various states of the application may correspond to different entries in the IMDB® databases. The illustrated IMDB® state link **364a** may include an application resource identifier **365b** that indicates a state corresponding to an entry for the movie “Toy Story.” Accordingly, selection of the IMDB® state link **364a** causes the search application **214** to instruct the operating system **212** of the remote computing device **200** to launch the IMDB® native application **218** and to access the “Toy Story” entry on the IMDB® native application based on the application resource identifier **365b** embedded in the state link **364a**. FIG. **7B** illustrates a GUI **250** of the selected native application **218** that was launched in response to the selection of the IMDB® state link **364a**. In this example, the selected native application displays an example entry for “Toy Story.”

FIGS. **8A-8B** illustrate another example of a search that is performed on a remote computing device **200**. In FIG. **8A**, a user has entered a search query **262** into the GUI **250** of the search application **214**. Specifically, the user has entered the search query “Late night diners by me” into a search bar **252** of the GUI **250**. In response to receiving the search query **262**, the search application **214** generates a query wrapper **260** including the search query **262** and other parameters **264** (e.g., geo-location of the device) and transmits the query wrapper **260** to the search server **300**.



## 31

The search server 300 receives the query wrapper 260 and generates search results 360 based thereon. The search server 300 may transmit search results 360 including a set of result objects 362 to the remote computing device 200. In the illustrated example, the result objects 362 identify the “YELP®”, “OPENTABLE®”, “TRIPADVISOR®”, and “URBANSPOON®” applications. The GUI 250 may include state links 364 to the applications in the search results 360. A user may select (e.g., touch or click) the state links 364 to access the resource indicated in the state link 364. For example, a user may select the area of the GUI 250 including the OPENTABLE® icon to select a state link 364 to the OPENTABLE® application. In another example, one or more state links 364 may be provided for one or more applications listed in the search engine result page.

The GUI 250 in FIG. 8A includes a plurality of different state links 364. Three state links 364a, 364b, 364c provide access to different states of the YELP® application. In the case of YELP®, each state may correspond to a different entry. For example, the state links 364a, 364b, 364c may provide access to entries for “IHOP®”, “DENNY’S®”, and “TACO BELL®”, respectively, in the YELP® application. In the example of FIG. 8A, the user selects the DENNY’S® state link 364b. The DENNY’S® state link 364b may include an application resource identifier 365b to an entry for the restaurant DENNY’S® in the YELP® native application. Accordingly, selecting the DENNY’S® state link 364b causes the search application 214 to instruct the operating system 212 to launch the YELP® native application and access an entry for DENNY’S® based on an application resource identifier embedded in the state link 364a. FIG. 8B shows an example GUI 250 of a selected application that the operating system 212 launched in response to the selection of the DENNY’S® state link 364b.

FIGS. 9A and 9B illustrate another example of a search that may be performed on a remote computing device 200. In FIG. 9A, a user has entered the search query “thai” into the search bar 252 of the GUI 250 and executed the search by, for example, selecting the search button 254 of the GUI 250. In response to the search query 262, the search application 214 generates a query wrapper 260 including the search query 262 and any other query parameters 264 (e.g., geo-location and/or operating system of the remote computing device 200) and transmits the query wrapper 260 to the search server 300.

The search server 300 receives the query wrapper 260 and generates search results 360 based thereon. The search server 300 may transmit search results 360 including a set of result objects 362 to the remote computing device 200. The set of result objects 362 includes result objects 362 corresponding to the YELP® and OPENTABLE® applications. Each result object 362 include multiple state links 364 to the respective applications. A user may select a state link 364 to access the entry indicated in the state link 364. For example, a user may select a state link 364a corresponding to the Bangkok Bistro to view the Bangkok Bistro entry in the YELP® application.

The GUI 250 in FIG. 9A includes three state links 364a, 364b, 364c that provide access to entries in the YELP® application. For example, the state links 364a, 364b, 364c may provide access to entries for “Bangkok Bistro,” “Buda Thai,” and “Shang Thai Restaurant” in the YELP® application. The GUI in FIG. 9A includes three state links 364d, 364e, 364f that provide access to entries in the OPENTABLE® application. For example, the state links 364d, 364e, 364f may provide access to entries for “Baan Thai House & Wine Bar,” “Basil Canteen @ 11th Street,” and

## 32

“Blackwood” in the OPENTABLE® application. The state links 364d, 364e, 364f for “Baan Thai House & Wine Bar,” “Basil Canteen @ 11th Street,” and “Blackwood,” respectively, include a portion of the OPENTABLE® application GUI 910a, 910b, 910c relating to making reservations at available reservation times. In this way, the user can access the functionality of the OPENTABLE® application directly from the GUI 250 of the search application 214.

The GUI 250 of FIG. 9A also includes icons 902a, 902b that indicate whether the native applications for YELP® and OPENTABLE® are currently installed on the remote computing device 200. The “Open” icon 902a indicates that the YELP® native application can be launched by the remote computing device 200, which implies that the YELP® native application is installed on the remote computing device 200. The user may select (e.g., touch) the “Open” icon 902a to launch the YELP® native application to a default state (e.g., a home screen” of the YELP® native application). The “Free” icon 902b indicates that the OPENTABLE® native application can be downloaded to the remote computing device 200 and is not installed thereon. In some examples, a user may select the “Free” icon 902b to launch an application marketplace (e.g., GOOGLE PLAY® or the APP STORE®) that provides the OPENTABLE® native application for download or to automatically start downloading the OPENTABLE® native application to the remote computing device 200. Selecting the Baan Thai House & Wine Bar state link 364d may cause the search application 214 to attempt to launch the OPENTABLE® native application. When the remote computing device 200 determines that the attempt was unsuccessful, the search application 214 can instruct the operating system 212 to access the entry for Baan Thai House & Wine Bar in the OPENTABLE® web application based on the web resource identifier 365a embedded in the state link 364d. FIG. 9B illustrates a GUI 250 of the OPENTABLE® web application that is displayed by the web browser of the remote computing device 200 in response to selection of the Baan Thai House & Wine Bar state link 364d.

FIG. 10 illustrates another example of a search being performed on a remote computing device 200. In FIG. 10, the user has entered the search query “taxi” into the search bar 252 of the GUI 250. As described above, the search server 300 receives a query wrapper 260 containing the search query 262 and other query parameters 264 (e.g., geo-location of the remote computing device 200) from the remote computing device 200 and generates search results 360 based on the query wrapper 260. In the example of FIG. 10, the search server 300 may forward a geo-location query parameter 264 to a server associated with the GETT® application in a request. In response, the server associated with the GETT® application may return dynamic data, such as estimated distances of various taxi drivers with respect to the remote computing device 200 and an estimated amount of time that it would take for the taxi driver to arrive to the user. The search server 300 can embed the dynamic data in the state links 364, such that the GUI 250 displays the dynamic data as additional data 368 in the state link 364. If the user wishes to make a taxi reservation, the user can select one of the state links 364 to make the taxi reservation. Selection of a state link 364 can launch the GETT® native application thereby initiating the taxi reservation.

The searches explained with respect to FIGS. 7A-10 are provided for example only and are not intended to limit the types of searches that may be performed. Further, the results



of the searches are provided for example only and various search results 360 may be displayed in any other suitable manner.

FIGS. 11A and 11B illustrate example operations performed by a search server 300 for processing a query received from a remote computing device 200. The operations 1100 described herein may be performed by the processing device 310 of the search server 300.

At operation 1110, the search server 300 receives a query from a remote computing device 200. In some implementations, the query is included in a query wrapper 260 that contains query parameters 264. The query parameters 262, 264 can include a search query 262 (i.e., one or more query terms). In some implementations, the query parameters 262, 264 can further include additional query parameters 264 (e.g., a geo-location of the remote computing device 200, an operating system 212 of the remote computing device 200, a device type of the remote computing device 200, and/or a username of the user of the remote computing device 200).

At operation 1112, the search server 300 identifies a set of third party applications corresponding to the query. The search server 300 can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, or a name search using the query parameters 262, 264 received in the query wrapper 260. The result of the search or searches is a set of third party applications that are relevant to one or more of the query parameters 262, 264 provided in the query wrapper by the remote computing device 200.

At operation 1114, the search server 300 generates one or more resource identifiers 365 for the third party applications indicated in the set of third party applications. For a third party application, the search server 300 generates resource identifiers 365 based on the query parameters 262, 264 and the command templates 346 corresponding to the third party application. The search server 300 can identify relevant command templates 346 from the command template data store 336 based on entity types of one or more of the query parameters 262, 264. For example, if the query parameters 262, 264 include a movie name and a time and the set of applications include an application for finding movie times at movie theatres near the remote computing device 200, the search server 300 may identify one or more command templates 346 that receive these types of parameters. The search server 300 may utilize an association table corresponding to the third party application to identify the relevant parameters that were included in the query parameters 262, 264. The search server 300 can identify web application command templates 346a and/or native application command templates 346b for the third party application. The search server 300 can substitute the relevant query parameters 262, 264 into the parameters fields defined in the command templates 346, each time generating a resource identifier 365.

At operation 1116, the search server 300 generates one or more state links 364 for the third party applications based on the generated resource identifiers 365. The search server 300 can embed the generated application resource identifiers 365b and/or web resource identifiers 365a into a state link 364. In some scenarios, the search server 300 can select more than one resource identifier 365 to embed in a state link 364. For example, if the third party application accepts both application resource identifiers 365b (for launching a native application 218 of the third party application to a specified state) and web resource identifiers 365a (for accessing a web application of the third party application at a specified state), then the search server 300 can select multiple resource identifiers 365 for inclusion in the state link 364, provided

the resource identifiers 365 correspond to the same state (e.g., provide the same information). When the state link 364 contains more than one resource identifier, the search server 300 can further include a set of instructions indicating an order by which the resource identifiers can be selected. For example, the set of instructions can instruct the remote computing device 200 to attempt to launch the native application 218 using the application resource contained in the state link 364, and if unsuccessful, to access the web application using the web resource identifier 365a contained in the state link 364. In some implementations, the search server 300 includes additional data in the state link 364. For example, the search server 300 can include visual indicators 366 (e.g., icons, logos, screen shots, GUI 250 elements of the third party application) and/or metadata (e.g., descriptions, ratings, rankings, and dynamic data) in the state link 364. The additional data can be obtained from any suitable source, including a server associated with the third party application, the application data store 332, and/or the entity data store 334.

At operation 1118, the search server 300 generates search results 360 based on the generated state links 364. For each third party application in the set of third party applications, the search server 300 can group the state links 364 for the third party application together. The search server 300 can then generate a result object 362 for the third party application based on the grouped state links 364. The search results 360 include the result objects 362 corresponding to each of the third party applications.

At operation 1120, the search server 300 transmits the search results 360 to the remote computing device 200. The remote computing device 200 can then display the search results 360 via its user interface device 240. The user can access a state of a third party application indicated in the search results (360) by selecting a state link 364 included in the search results 360.

FIGS. 12A and 12B illustrate example operations 1200 performed by a search server 300 processing a query received from a remote computing device 200. The operations 1200 described herein may be performed by the processing device 310 of the search server 300.

At operation 1210, the search server 300 receives a query from a remote computing device 200. In some implementations, the query is included in a query wrapper 260 that contains query parameters 262, 264. The query parameters 262, 264 can include a search query 262 (i.e., one or more query terms). In some implementations, the query parameters 262, 264 can further include additional query parameters 264 (e.g., a geo-location of the remote computing device 200, an operating system of the remote computing device 200, a device type of the remote computing device 200, and/or a username of the user of the remote computing device 200).

At operation 1212, the search server 300 identifies a set of third party applications corresponding to the query. The search server 300 can perform one or more of a functional search, an entity search, or a name search using the query parameters 262, 264 received in the query. The result of the search or searches is a set of third party applications that are relevant to one or more of the query parameters 262, 264 provided in the query by the remote computing device 200.

At operation 1214, the search server 300 generates requests based on request command templates 346c corresponding to the third party applications. For each relevant third party application, the search server 300 retrieves one or more request command templates 346c from the command template data store 336. The search server 300 can deter-



## 35

mine which request command templates **346c** to retrieve based on the entity types contained in the query. In some implementations, the search server **300** utilizes an association table to identify relevant request command templates **346c**. The search server **300** can insert identified entities from the query into the parameter fields of a request command template **346c** to generate a request.

At operation **1216**, the search server **300** transmits the requests to the servers of the third party applications indicated in the set of third party applications. In some implementations, the requests for a particular third party application can be sent to a web server **130** of the third party application. At operation **1218**, the search server **300** receives responses from the servers of the third party applications. In implementations where the server is a web server **130**, the response can include a web resource identifier **365a** of a state corresponding to the parameters included in the request. The search server **300** may receive multiple responses from multiple servers.

At operation **1220**, the search server **300** generates state links **364** based on the responses. In some implementations, the search server **300** can convert the web resource identifiers **365a** received in the responses into application resource identifiers **365b** based on conversion rules corresponding to each respective third party application. In some scenarios, a conversion rule can result in multiple application resource identifiers **365b** being converted from a web resource identifier **365a** (e.g., in the case of multiple versions of the native application **218**). The search server **300** can group application resource identifiers **365b** and a web resource identifier **365a** corresponding to the same state of the third party application together. The search server **300** can embed the grouped application resource identifiers **365b** and web resource identifier **365a** into a state link **364**. In this way, the search server **300** can generate multiple state links **364** for a third party application, and can generate one or more state links **364** for each of the third party applications indicated in the set of third party applications. When the state link **364** contains more than one resource identifier **365** (e.g., one or more application resource identifiers **365b** and a web resource identifier **365a**), the search server **300** can further include a set of instructions indicating an order by which the resource identifiers **365** can be selected. For example, the set of instructions can instruct the remote computing device **200** to attempt to launch the native application **218** using the application resource application identifier **365b** contained in the state link **364** and if unsuccessful to access the web application using the web resource identifier **365a** contained in the state link **364**. In some implementations, the search server **300** includes additional data in the state link **364**. For example, the search server **300** can include visual indicators **366** (e.g., icons, logos, screen shots, GUI **250** elements of the third party application) and/or metadata (e.g., descriptions, ratings, rankings, dynamic data) in the state link **364**. The additional data can be obtained from any suitable source, including a server associated with the third party application, the application data store **332**, and/or the entity data store **334**.

At operation **1222**, the search server **300** generates search results **360** based on the state links **364**. For each third party application having at least one state link **364** generated therefor, the search server **300** can group the state links **364** for the third party application together. The search server **300** can then generate a result object **362** for the third party application based on the grouped state links **364**. The search results **360** include the result objects **362** corresponding to each of the third party applications.

## 36

At operation **1224**, the search server **300** transmits the search results **360** to the remote computing device **200**. The remote computing device **200** can then display the search results **360** via its user interface device **240**. The user can access a state of a third party application indicated in the search results **360** by selecting a state link **364** included in the search results **360**.

## Computing Machine Architecture

FIG. **13** is a block diagram illustrating components of an example machine able to read instructions from, for example, a non-transitory machine-readable medium and execute them in one or more processors (or controllers). Specifically, FIG. **13** shows a diagrammatic representation of a machine in the example form of a computer system **1300** within which instructions **1324** (e.g., software or program code) for causing the machine to perform any one or more of the methodologies discussed herein may be executed. The methodologies include those described with respect to FIGS. **3A**, **3B**, **4**, **5**, and **6**. In alternative embodiments, the machine operates as a standalone device or may be connected (e.g., networked) to other machines. In a networked deployment, the machine may operate in the capacity of a server machine or a client machine in a server-client network environment, or as a peer machine in a peer-to-peer (or distributed) network environment.

The machine for this configuration may be a mobile computing device such as a tablet computer, an ultrabook (or netbook) computer, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a cellular telephone, a smartphone, a web appliance, or like machine capable of executing instructions **1324** (sequential or otherwise) that specify actions to be taken by that machine. Further, while only a single machine is illustrated, the term “machine” shall also be taken to include any collection of machines that individually or jointly execute instructions **1324** to perform any one or more of the methodologies discussed herein.

The example computer system **1300** includes one or more processors **1302** (e.g., a central processing unit (CPU) and may also include a graphics processing unit (GPU), a digital signal processor (DSP), one or more application specific integrated circuits (ASICs), one or more radio-frequency integrated circuits (or chipset) (RFICs), a wireless fidelity (WiFi) chipset, a global positioning system (GPS) chipset, an accelerometer (one, two, or three-dimensional), or any combination of these). The computer system **1300** also includes a main memory **1304** and a static memory **1306**. The components of the computing system are configured to communicate with each other via a bus **1308**. The computer system **1300** may further include a graphics display unit **1310** (e.g., a plasma display panel (PDP), a liquid crystal display (LCD), glass display) which may be configured for capacitive or inductive touch sensitivity to allow for direct interaction with software user interfaces through the display **1310**. The computer system **1300** may also include an alphanumeric input device **1312** (e.g., a keyboard), a cursor control device **1314** (e.g., a mouse, a trackball, a joystick, a motion sensor, or other pointing instrument), a storage unit **1316**, a signal generation device **1318** (e.g., a speaker), and a network interface device **1320**, which also are configured to communicate via the bus **1308**.

The storage unit **1316** includes a machine-readable medium **1322** on which is stored instructions **1324** (e.g., software) embodying any one or more of the methodologies or functions described herein. The instructions **1324** (e.g., software) may also reside, completely or at least partially, within the main memory **1304** or within the processor **1302** (e.g., within a processor's cache memory) during execution



thereof by the computer system 1300, the main memory 1304 and the processor 1302 also constituting machine-readable media. The instructions 1324 (e.g., software) may be transmitted or received over a network 1326 via the network interface device 1320.

While machine-readable medium 1322 is shown in an example embodiment to be a single medium, the term “machine-readable medium” should be taken to include a single medium or multiple media (e.g., a centralized or distributed database, or associated caches and servers) able to store instructions (e.g., instructions 1324). The term “machine-readable medium” shall also be taken to include any medium that is capable of storing instructions (e.g., instructions 1324) for execution by the machine and that cause the machine to perform any one or more of the methodologies disclosed herein. The term “machine-readable medium” includes, but may not be limited to, data repositories in the form of solid-state memories, optical media, and magnetic media.

#### Additional Configuration Considerations

Throughout this specification, plural instances may implement components, operations, or structures described as a single instance. Although individual operations of one or more methods are illustrated and described as separate operations, one or more of the individual operations may be performed concurrently, and nothing requires that the operations be performed in the order illustrated. Structures and functionality presented as separate components in example configurations may be implemented as a combined structure or component. Similarly, structures and functionality presented as a single component may be implemented as separate components. These and other variations, modifications, additions, and improvements fall within the scope of the subject matter herein.

Various implementations of the systems and methods described here can be realized in digital electronic and/or optical circuitry, integrated circuitry, specially designed ASICs (application specific integrated circuits), computer hardware, firmware, software, and/or combinations thereof. These various implementations can include implementation in one or more computer programs that are executable and/or interpretable on a programmable system including at least one programmable processor, which may be special or general purpose, coupled to receive data and instructions from, and to transmit data and instructions to, a storage system, at least one input device, and at least one output device.

These computer programs (also known as programs, software, software applications, scripts, or program code) include machine instructions, e.g., 1324, for a programmable processor, e.g., 1302, and can be implemented in a high-level procedural and/or object-oriented programming language, and/or in assembly/machine language. The computer programs can be structured functionality in units referenced as “modules,” for example, as illustrated in FIG. 2. As used herein, the terms “machine-readable medium” and “computer-readable medium” refer to any computer program product, non-transitory computer readable medium, apparatus and/or device (e.g., magnetic discs, optical disks, memory, Programmable Logic Devices (PLDs)) used to provide machine instructions and/or data to a programmable processor, including a machine-readable medium that receives machine instructions as a machine-readable signal. The term “machine-readable signal” refers to any signal used to provide machine instructions and/or data to a programmable processor.

Implementations of the subject matter and the functional operations described in this specification can be implemented in digital electronic circuitry, or in computer software, firmware, or hardware, including the structures disclosed in this specification and their structural equivalents, or in combinations of one or more of them. Moreover, subject matter described in this specification can be implemented as one or more computer program products, i.e., one or more modules of computer program instructions encoded on a computer readable medium for execution by, or to control the operation of, data processing apparatus. The computer readable medium can be a machine-readable storage device, a machine-readable storage substrate, a memory device, a composition of matter effecting a machine-readable propagated signal, or a combination of one or more of them. The terms “data processing apparatus”, “computing device” and “computing processor” encompass all apparatus, devices, and machines for processing data, including by way of example a programmable processor, a computer, or multiple processors or computers. The apparatus can include, in addition to hardware, code that creates an execution environment for the computer program in question, e.g., code that constitutes processor firmware, a protocol stack, a database management system, an operating system, or a combination of one or more of them. A propagated signal is an artificially generated signal, e.g., a machine-generated electrical, optical, or electromagnetic signal that is generated to encode information for transmission to suitable receiver apparatus.

A computer program can be written in any form of programming language, including compiled or interpreted languages, and it can be deployed in any form, including as a stand-alone program or as a module, component, subroutine, or other unit suitable for use in a computing environment. A computer program does not necessarily correspond to a file in a file system. A program can be stored in a portion of a file that holds other programs or data (e.g., one or more scripts stored in a markup language document), in a single file dedicated to the program in question, or in multiple coordinated files (e.g., files that store one or more modules, sub programs, or portions of code). A computer program can be deployed to be executed on one computer or on multiple computers that are located at one site or distributed across multiple sites and interconnected by a communication network.

The processes and logic flows described in this specification can be performed by one or more programmable processors executing one or more computer programs to perform functions by operating on input data and generating output. The processes and logic flows can also be performed by, and apparatus can also be implemented as, special purpose logic circuitry, e.g., an FPGA (field programmable gate array) or an ASIC (application specific integrated circuit).

Processors suitable for the execution of a computer program include, by way of example, both general and special purpose microprocessors, and any one or more processors of any kind of digital computer. Generally, a processor will receive instructions and data from a read only memory or a random access memory or both. The essential elements of a computer are a processor for performing instructions and one or more memory devices for storing instructions and data. Generally, a computer will also include, or be operatively coupled to receive data from or transfer data to, or both, one or more mass storage devices for storing data, e.g., magnetic, magneto optical disks, or optical disks. However, a computer need not have such devices. Moreover, a com-



puter can be embedded in another device, e.g., a mobile telephone, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a mobile audio player, a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, to name just a few. Computer readable media suitable for storing computer program instructions and data include all forms of non-volatile memory, media and memory devices, including by way of example semiconductor memory devices, e.g., EPROM, EEPROM, and flash memory devices; magnetic disks, e.g., internal hard disks or removable disks; magneto optical disks; and CD ROM and DVD-ROM disks. The processor and the memory can be supplemented by, or incorporated in, special purpose logic circuitry.

To provide for interaction with a user, one or more aspects of the disclosure can be implemented on a computer having a display device, e.g., a CRT (cathode ray tube), LCD (liquid crystal display) monitor, or touch screen for displaying information to the user and optionally a keyboard and a pointing device, e.g., a mouse or a trackball, by which the user can provide input to the computer. Other kinds of devices can be used to provide interaction with a user as well; for example, feedback provided to the user can be any form of sensory feedback, e.g., visual feedback, auditory feedback, or tactile feedback; and input from the user can be received in any form, including acoustic, speech, or tactile input. In addition, a computer can interact with a user by sending documents to and receiving documents from a device that is used by the user; for example, by sending web pages to a web browser on a user's client device in response to requests received from the web browser.

One or more aspects of the disclosure can be implemented in a computing system that includes a backend component, e.g., as a data server, or that includes a middleware component, e.g., an application server, or that includes a frontend component, e.g., a client computer having a graphical user interface or a Web browser through which a user can interact with an implementation of the subject matter described in this specification, or any combination of one or more such backend, middleware, or frontend components. The components of the system can be interconnected by any form or medium of digital data communication, e.g., a communication network. Examples of communication networks include a local area network ("LAN") and a wide area network ("WAN"), an inter-network (e.g., the Internet), and peer-to-peer networks (e.g., ad hoc peer-to-peer networks).

The computing system can include clients and servers. A client and server are generally remote from each other and typically interact through a communication network. The relationship of client and server arises by virtue of computer programs running on the respective computers and having a client-server relationship to each other. In some implementations, a server transmits data (e.g., an HTML page) to a client device (e.g., for purposes of displaying data to and receiving user input from a user interacting with the client device). Data generated at the client device (e.g., a result of the user interaction) can be received from the client device at the server.

While this specification contains many specifics, these should not be construed as limitations on the scope of the disclosure or of what may be claimed, but rather as descriptions of features specific to particular implementations of the disclosure. Certain features that are described in this specification in the context of separate implementations can also be implemented in combination in a single implementation. Conversely, various features that are described in the context of a single implementation can also be implemented in multiple implementations separately or in any suitable sub-combination. Moreover, although features may be described

above as acting in certain combinations and even initially claimed as such, one or more features from a claimed combination can in some cases be excised from the combination, and the claimed combination may be directed to a sub-combination or variation of a sub-combination.

Similarly, while operations are depicted in the drawings in a particular order, this should not be understood as requiring that such operations be performed in the particular order shown or in sequential order, or that all illustrated operations be performed, to achieve desirable results. In certain circumstances, multi-tasking and parallel processing may be advantageous. Moreover, the separation of various system components in the embodiments described above should not be understood as requiring such separation in all embodiments, and it should be understood that the described program components and systems can generally be integrated together in a single software product or packaged into multiple software products.

A number of implementations have been described. Nevertheless, it will be understood that various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the disclosure. Accordingly, other implementations are within the scope of the following claims. For example, the actions recited in the claims can be performed in a different order and still achieve desirable results.

Upon reading this disclosure, those of skill in the art will appreciate still additional alternative structural and functional designs for a system and a process for deep search in computing environments through the disclosed principles herein. Thus, while particular embodiments and applications have been illustrated and described, it is to be understood that the disclosed embodiments are not limited to the precise construction and components disclosed herein. Various modifications, changes and variations, which will be apparent to those skilled in the art, may be made in the arrangement, operation and details of the method and apparatus disclosed herein without departing from the spirit and scope defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A mobile computing device comprising:

a touchscreen display;

a transceiver;

a non-transitory memory that stores a first native application that is installed at the mobile computing device, wherein the first native application is associated with a search engine operator; and

a computing processor that executes computer readable instructions that cause the computing processor to:

display a first graphical user interface (GUI) on the touchscreen display via the first native application, wherein the first GUI is configured to accept search queries;

receive a search query via the first GUI, wherein the search query comprises one or more search terms;

transmit the search query to a search engine via the transceiver, wherein the search engine is associated with a search server remote from the mobile computing device;

receive search results from the search engine in response to transmitting the search query to the search engine, wherein at least one of the search results comprises a post execution view of a second native application; and

display the post execution view on the touchscreen display, wherein the post execution view comprises a second GUI that provides access to a function associated with the second native application,



41

wherein the second GUI is rendered within the first native application, and wherein the second GUI is configured to allow a user of the mobile computing device to, by interacting with the second GUI, initiate the function associated with the second native application.

2. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the post execution view is generated by executing the second native application at the search server associated with the search engine.

3. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the post execution view corresponds to a particular screen of the second native application.

4. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the second GUI is configured to accept input from the user.

5. The mobile computing device of claim 4, wherein the second GUI comprises a search field that is configured to receive the user input.

6. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the second GUI is configured to display information associated with the second native application.

7. The mobile computing device of claim 6, wherein: the search terms indicate a location; and the second GUI displays information that is associated with the location.

8. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein: the second native application comprises an application for making reservations; the second GUI includes a user-selectable link; and in response to selection of the user-selectable link by the user, the second GUI initiates a reservation function via the second native application.

9. The mobile computing device of claim 8, wherein: the search terms specify a location; and in response to selection of the user-selectable link by the user of the mobile computing device, the second GUI initiates the reservation function via the second native application for an establishment selected based on the location.

10. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein: the search results comprise a user-selectable link; and displaying the post execution view comprises: displaying the user-selectable link; detecting selection of the user-selectable link by the user; and displaying the post execution view in response to detecting the user selection of the user-selectable link.

11. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein displaying the first GUI comprises executing the first native application.

12. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein displaying the first GUI comprises displaying a search box.

42

13. The mobile computing device of claim 12, wherein displaying the search box comprises displaying the search box on a home screen.

14. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the first native application comprises a search application developed by the search engine operator.

15. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein receiving the search query comprises receiving text via the first GUI.

16. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein receiving the search query comprises detecting speech via the first GUI.

17. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the search results comprise a link to download the second native application; and wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to display the link to download the second native application.

18. The mobile computing device of claim 17, wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to:

detect a user selection of the link; and  
download the second native application upon detecting the user selection of the link.

19. The mobile computing device of claim 18, wherein downloading the second native application comprises: launching an application marketplace; and initiating a download function of the second native application via the application marketplace.

20. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the search results comprise a rating for the second native application; and wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to display the rating for the second native application on the touchscreen display.

21. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the search results comprise a description of the second native application; and wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to display the description of the second native application on the touchscreen display.

22. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the search results comprise a logo or an image that is associated with the second native application; and wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to display the logo or the image associated with the second native application on the touchscreen display.

23. The mobile computing device of claim 1, wherein the search results indicate that the second native application is free to download; and wherein the computer readable instructions further cause the computing processor to display "free" on the touchscreen display to indicate that the second native application is free to download.

\* \* \* \* \*